

# 第3のヒロイン、現る

「舞-HiME★DESTINY  
龍の巫女」ヒロイン  
**神楽真夜**

[かぐら・まよ]

15歳。北海道「星之宮風華学園」に転校してきたツインテールの美少女。ちょっと涙目が似合う、どじっ娘ロリ巨乳。手錠をされて転校してくるのがアヤしすぎ……

「舞-乙HiME」ヒロイン  
**アリカ・ユメミヤ**

企画／サンライズ

原作／矢立 肇

キャラクターデザイン／久行宏和

監督／伊吹秀明

イラスト／目黒三吉



# 『舞-HiME』伝説、第3弾!!

舞-HiME  
ビッグバン  
プロジェクト

ノベルで紡ぐ!!

「舞-HiME」ヒロイン  
鴛羽舞衣

## 舞-HiME DESTINY 龍の巫女

アニメ「舞-HiME」シリーズで確立された[キャラクタースターシステム]。  
既存のキャラクターをアクター・アクトレスとして  
次作の“ステージ”にて活躍させる画期的システム。奇跡の手法。  
そして……今春、ノベルにて3度目の奇跡が起こる——!!



菊川雪之

〔きくかわ・ゆきの〕

「星之宮風華学園・生徒会会計」。クレバーで涼しげな印象を与える、心根の優しい眼鏡っ娘。直情型の道をいさめる毎日(涙)

原田千絵

〔はらだ・ちえ〕

好奇心旺盛、星之宮風華学園の情報通。どちらボーイッシュな眼鏡っ娘。良く生徒会には出入りしている

瀬能あおい

〔せのう・あおい〕

よく言えばおっとり、別の言い方をすれば呑気な星之宮風華学園の生徒。千絵とつるむことが多い

珠洲城遥

〔すずしろ・はるか〕

「星之宮風華学園・生徒会書記長」。静留にライバル心を抱く血気盛んな正義の人。性格は猪突猛進型! ちなみに彼女の頭突きはたいそう痛い

藤乃静留

〔ふじの・しずる〕

泣く子も萌える「星之宮風華学園・生徒会会長」。漆黒の制服を身に纏う。美しい風貌とは裏腹に、闇社会の大物も震え上がる強大な戦闘力の持ち主。でも「カワイイ娘さんは好物ですえー」と変わらぬ京都弁

ノベルによる新たな「舞-HiME」シリーズの舞台は北海道。

人外の能力を持つ高校生が通う学び舎だ。

いや……“檻”と言った方が正しいのだろうか?

# 『星之宮風華学園』

## ——此处は魔人の集う場所



そして……『もう一人のヒロイン』

## 天王寺しおん

【てんのうじ・しおん】

メガネのよく似合うクールビューティー。真夜とは対照的(?)にスレンダーな肢体の持ち主だ。彼女は今後、どのように真夜と関わっていくのか!? えっ、敵なの!? もしかして味方!? いや、なつきの跡を継ぐことになるのか!?

## 新たな「夢の在り処」 星之宮風華学園

現在OVA『舞-HiME Zwei』シリーズが好評発売中の『舞-HiME』シリーズ。この作品の主な特徴に『キャラクターシステム』と呼ばれる画期的手法がある。さながら舞台を移すようにそれこそ『第1回公演』のように、『舞-HiME』で人氣を博したキャラクターが別のステージで別の役割を演じるのだ。『キャラクターシステム』を使用した第2シリーズ『舞-HiME』が大成功をおさめたことは読者も記憶に新しいだろう。そしてテキストメディアにより、その第3弾として始まるのが『舞-HiME★DESTINY 龍の巫女』である。

舞台は北海道にある『星之宮風華学園』。ヒロインは8回目の転校となる神楽真夜。

「えーと、なんでそんなに転校するかなあ……」という疑問を抱く人もいるでしょう。しかも彼女ってば手錠をされているのだよ。な、なんだこの娘!! かわいいけど、カワイイけど……アヤシイよ(クスリ)。ただ、真夜を迎え入れる星之宮風華学園も一筋縄ではいかない学園であった。ここは「ある能力」を持つ生徒だけが在籍できる特別な学び舎なんだな(能力は読んでのお楽しみ)。

そしてその学び舎には『舞-HiME』ファンにはご存知のメンバーが勢ぞろいであるのだよ!! 静留が! 遥が! なつきが! アンドモア!! もう素敵な役割で出てくるのさね。さらにミステリアスな新キャラクター・天王寺しおんの存在も気になる。この娘もハンパなくカワイイね。彼女と真夜の関係は今後明かされていくぞ。

2007年を駆け抜ける新たな『舞-HiME』シリーズに、皆さま、ご期待しませい!!



# CHAPTER 1:

THE MYSTERIOUS TRANSFER  
STUDENT AND THE EVEN  
MORE MYSTERIOUS ACADEMY

# 舞・HIME DESTINY 龍の巫女

北海道。人里はなれた山中深く。  
ゆらりゆらりと歩を進める“手錠”  
の少女。ツインテール。あどけ  
なさの残る顔とはうらはらに発  
育のよいバスト。  
その娘……神楽真夜が向かう先  
……星之宮風華学園は静かに佇  
んでいた。  
ノベルにより紡がれる新たな「舞  
・HIME」伝説、ここに開幕。

原作/  
**矢立 肇**

企画/  
**サンライズ**

キャラクターデザイン/  
**久行宏和**

著者/  
**伊吹秀明**

イラスト/  
**目黒三吉**



©サンライズ



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY~龍の巫女~

It was a scene that could have been turned into a tourist postcard. The green horizon rose in the serene May light. There are only a few places in Japan where you can feel the roundness of the Earth like this.

Into that scene slid a car that was clearly out of place.

If there had been a painter who had set his easel on top of that hill to sketch the scenery, he would surely have frowned. Or perhaps he would have begun to raise his voice in protest, only to stop.

He would have stopped? Yes, for that car’s activity was unusual.

It was a black foreign luxury car. That car, which looked like it could only have been carrying someone important, flew down the road as though it didn’t know the words “speed limit”. It wasn’t the sort of thing a person with normal nerves would have been a part of.

After speeding down that almost 30 kilometer long straightaway, which could not have been seen in any other part of Japan, the car eventually slowed down and turned onto the first side road. As the road turned, it became narrower, until it became the forest path known to the locals as “Kanizoku,” into which even bike tourists would not go.

The car stopped beneath the beckoning petals of a sargent cherry tree.

The driver-side and passenger-side doors opened simultaneously, and two men stepped out. The driver was wearing sunglasses, and the other man had a moustache. They gazed about the area as though on the lookout for something.

Their watchfulness and high-quality black suits were a perfect match for the car they had come in.

However...

If one were to examine the scene carefully, they would notice that certain things were out of place. The bruises on their foreheads and cheeks; the countless tears and dirt spots on their suits.

And what was most out place was the passenger they were carrying.

“This is it.” The mustached man slowly opened the rear door.

The shining light made the condition of the rear seat plainly visible. Candy, chocolate, gum, rice crackers, all sorts of snack foods. Buried under a mountain of snack wrappers that was entirely out of place in such a high-class car, a girl was sitting.

“This is as far as we can take you. Please get out.”

After being asked several times, the girl finally raised herself up.

“If you walk in that direction, you’ll get there. Clothes and other necessary items have already been sent ahead. Also, the bears in this area are bigger and fiercer than the ones in Honshu. If you meet one...” The mustached man was tapped on the shoulder by the sunglass man, and stopped talking. Realizing that it was unnecessary advice, he smiled bitterly.

“Well then, we’ll be leaving.” Knowing that to stay longer would be pointless, they drove off, leaving the girl behind.

As the figure diminished in the rear view mirror, the feeling of relief between the two grew.

All that was left was to go home and sleep. Having come all the way to Hokkaido, they had planned to visit Susukino in Sapporo, but that plan had already disappeared from their minds. Even though they’d been driving in shifts, the long journey had worn them out. Not to mention that what they’d been carrying was something that could fray the nerves of even a couple of strong men.

“...I finally remembered.”

“What?”

“*The Wages of Fear*.” Maybe because he’d been released from his nervousness, the sunglassed man’s voice was unusually lively as he gripped the wheel.

“What are you talking about?”

“It’s the title of a movie. It’s old, but famous. I watched it on my movie-loving uncle’s advice. A rental, that is. While we were driving, images from that movie were floating around in my head.”

“What was it about?”

“It’s about some guys carrying explosive-grade nitroglycerine to put out an oil field fire. The trucks were filled with the stuff, even a drop of which could send a boulder flying. Even though the slightest shock could have made it explode, they had to cross rotten bridges and oil-covered roads and such.”

“Damn, that’s nothing to laugh about.”

“Well, it’s over for us. What was the director’s name again? Henri something...”

“Never mind that, worry about how much gas we have left. This car can take a shot from a rifle, but it gets crap mileage.”

“I know. Henri...”

“I don’t care if his name’s “Ant.” Pay attention to the navigation system.”

“Henri-Georges...”

In the end, the sunglassed man couldn’t remember the director’s full name, and the two never made it to a gas station.



The girl who had gotten out of the car stood in that place for a while, but eventually she started walking slowly. It was a forest path that didn’t have houses, much less shops. Azaleas and anemones, for which the north was known, bloomed purple and white along the road, but the girl didn’t look.

There was no light in her eyes to suggest that she had any interest in her surroundings.

Perhaps because of her defenselessness, a sable, which rarely approached humans, came out from beneath the trees to run about her feet. The girl, however, stepped on its tail without even noticing, and the animal fled back into the thicket.

What made the girl snap out of her trance was not the calming greenery, but a disturbing noise.

The sound of an explosion pierced the trees. It was the sound of a car’s hood and roof, seats and windows being blown into tens of thousands of fragments of light alloy, glass, composite, and plastic.



“W-what was that just now? ...Ow.” The girl, who had just regained her senses, was hit in the head by something. Her long hair, which was tied up in twintails, bounced wildly.

“What’s this? ‘Potatoey potato chips, butter-mayo flavor’?” It was a still unopened snack food package.

“‘Potatoey potato’, isn’t that kind of repetitive? What’s more, butter and mayonnaise, isn’t that kind of high in calories? Wait...”

It wasn’t the time to be worrying about junk food names. Realizing what the real immediate problem was, the girl’s eyes grew wide with shock.

“Owa! What’s this!?”

Around the girl’s wrists was a pair of handcuffs.

“....fu. Fuhahahaha. These are toys, aren’t they?”

Although she laughed, trying to escape reality, the handcuffs were not toys. The shackles on her wrists were very heavy.

“This must be a dream.”

It wasn’t a dream. No matter how much she moved her wrists, the handcuffs clattering together, did nothing but make them hurt.

“I’m going to cry.”

Even if she were to cry and scream, she didn’t think anyone would come to help her.

“Where am I, anyways?”

Calm down. Try to remember.

As the girl’s mind finally started working, memories came forth one by one.

That’s right, this is Hokkaido, and...

“I remember! Today is the day I transfer to a new school. But, why am I wearing handcuffs? Hmm...”

No matter how much she thought, she couldn’t remember anything about that.

“Well, whatever. When I get to my new school, someone will do something about it. Yeah, definitely. That’s what’ll happen.”

Having forced herself to see the light of hope, the girl began to walk at a strong pace. Even though she couldn’t use her hands freely, she could still move her legs.

“Anyway, I heard that it was in the country, but to think that it was this deep in the mountains... I wonder if I’ll be late for my first day. It can’t be that I won’t make it before sunset, can it?”

Fortunately, there was no need to worry.

As the men in black had said, there was only one road. After walking for less than twenty minutes, she saw a sign guiding her to the school.

“In 200 meters, Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy. Yeah, this is definitely it.”

The transfer student – Kagura Mayo -, spoke as though to herself.



Mayo was 15 years and 7 months old, and she had already transferred schools seven times. She had been to many different kinds of schools, but this Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy, far from any villages, had an atmosphere all its own.

“To think that there was this kind of building so deep in the mountains...”

The school gate was an arch sculpted with baroque splendor. In the large courtyard there was a fountain, and eye-catching statues were lined up along the pathways.

“It’s like this isn’t Japan. ....Hm? Is that an animal? Something’s different...”

The statues Mayo approached were of mythical animals from the legends of many different cultures. Basilisk, unicorn, griffon, manticore, empusa....and dragon. Although they were creatures that did not exist in reality, the impressive garden and structures felt familiar.

In fact, the only things that were disturbing were the two cars idling in the courtyard.

At first glance, they seemed like the kind of minivan you could see anywhere, but because the window glass had been smoked, you couldn’t see inside.

Mayo raised her eyebrows. Her bad feeling was soon supported.

From just one look, she could tell that the man getting out of the car was not respectable. His eyebrows had been shaved off. He wore a glittering necklace, and his fingers were covered with rings. A yakuza. Those snake-like eyes looked at Mayo.

“Hey, the pair of tits over there.”

Irritation.

That again. At her previous schools, Mayo had been teased by the boys like that. Yeah, it was true that her breasts might be bigger than average for her generation.

Mayo was thinking that the uniforms at Fuuka Academy might be a problem. She had the feeling that where the different colored corsage met the waist, it overemphasized her breasts.

“Don’t ignore me. There’s a student named Fujino Shizuru here, right?”

“Fujino Shizuru-san. I don’t know.”

“There’s no way you don’t know.”

“But, I just got here...”

“Ah? What’s that...”

Noticing Mayo’s handcuffs, the yakuza suddenly got excited.

“Hey, come here for a sec.”

“No! Wait, let go of me!”

“What are you two doing!?”

A female student wearing the same uniform as Mayo was standing there. Long hair in a wave. Beneath short bangs, a round forehead and eyes that displayed a strong will. What’s more, her thrust-out chest suggested strong self-confidence.



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“Hm, another set of tits. Are you Fujino Shizuru?”

“W-who are you calling Fujino!?”

As though hearing that name lit a fire in her, the girl’s expression changed instantly. And she did something completely unexpected. Suddenly she grabbed the yakuza’s head with both hands and rammed her forehead into it! A dull sound echoed in the schoolyard.

“My name is Suzushiro Haruka. Don’t group me together with that bubuzuke woman.”

“Umm…I don’t think he’s in any position to listen…” Mayo pointed at the yakuza who was sprawled unconscious on the grass.

“Huh, he had a pretty weak head.”

“I don’t think that’s the issue…”

“Anyway, I haven’t seen you around here. …hm, handcuffs? Could you be an escaped prisoner!?” Haruka’s expression changed again.

“N-nonono, I’m not an escaped prisoner, and I don’t know why I have these handcuffs on, um…”

“Just come with me. I’m taking you in.”

“Taking me in…? Owa…wawawa!”

Once again, she didn’t get the chance to say yes or no. Suzushiro Haruka grabbed Mayo by the hand and dragged her along.



The inside of the school was quiet as a tomb. Perhaps it was because of the stillness or dignity of the place, but that front entrance and hallway, done in baroque style like the front gate, seemed to oblige one to be silent, as though it were a monastery.

Even so, Mayo didn’t have the luxury of calming down and observing her surroundings. However, Suzushiro Haruka, who was pulling her along by the hand, was always looking around restlessly. Her movements were like something out of a manga.

“Um…Suzushiro-senpai? Could you be skipping (saboru) class right now or something?” Mayo asked, thinking that Suzushiro was probably older than her.

“Potage? (potaaju) It’s not lunchtime right now.”

“It’s sabotage (sabotaaju), Haruka-chan” A door opened, and that comedic response came out. From a door marked “Student Council Room,” the face of a female student with glasses and curly short hair appeared.

But, what impeccable timing. Just from this, Mayo felt like she understood the meaning of the word “harmonization.”

“Yukino, I caught a suspicious person.”

“How am I suspicious?”

“Just keep walking!” Just like that, Mayo was pushed into the student council room.

“Ara, she’s as cute as I expected,” a girl who was working on a laptop said with a smile, Long, straight hair matched elegant, refined features. Her characteristic soft accent was a thing of the west.

In a room about half the size of a normal classroom, eight desks and chairs formed a half square shape. The only other things that stood out were the whiteboard and a printer/copier. The only people in the room were the glasses girl called Yukino and the girl who had just spoken.

“What do you mean, ‘as expected’?”

“I watched the whole thing on here.”

The Kansei-dialect speaking beauty turned the laptop around for easy viewing. On the LCD were four color images. One of them showed the two minivans.

“I’ve been looking at the pictures from the campus security cameras. Suzushiro-san, that was a splendid performance.”

“O-of course! It was nothing!”

To Mayo it sounded like she was saying that headbutting yakuza was a normal thing.

As they switched through images from all over the school – the entrance hall, gym, and various hallways – they saw a couple of suspicious men.

“I wonder if they’re fans. We’ve been getting popular lately,” said the girl with the computer.

“That car should hold eight people. With two, that makes sixteen. So there’re fifteen left.” Haruka sounded proud, as though she intended to defeat fifteen people.

“Well, President, what about evacuating the students?”

“I’ve already had Kikukawa-san gather them in the rear auditorium. That place is hard for outsiders to find, after all.”

“Um…President?” Mayo raised her hand timidly.

“What is it?”

“Is Fuuka Academy always this rough?”

“Rough? You say some amusing things, don’t you. Well, it’s not as though we don’t have any problems, but this is the first time gangsters have shown up.”

“Have you called the police? Where are the teachers?”

“The phone isn’t working, so we can’t call the police. They’ve probably cut the phone lines, you know.”

“You have cell phones, right?”

“Cell phones are prohibited here.”

“Eh!”

“Even if we had them, they wouldn’t work up here in the mountains. And the teachers who didn’t go to check out the explosion earlier have withdrawn from society.”

“Withdrawn…?”

“Our teachers often shut themselves away.”

“That’s crazy! This place is getting more and more suspicious!”

“You’re one to talk! Do you have a good explanation for those handcuffs? You’re not connected to that explosion earlier, are you?” Haruka said while approaching Mayo.

“Explosion? Now that she mentions it, there was a loud noise earlier…” Mayo thought while looking at the snack food package she was still carrying.

“Umm…I don’t remember anything. I slept through a long journey, and when I woke up, I was like this.”

“That’s hard to believe.”

“Ara, don’t jump to conclusions. That’s right, we haven’t been properly introduced. I’m this academy’s Student Council President. This is the secretary-“

“Secretary General!”

“Secretary General, Suzushiro-san. And this is the treasurer, Kikukawa-san.” The glasses girl gave a little bow.

“And you are?” While looking at Mayo’s bewildered expression, the President exchanged glances with Yukino.

“May I, President?”

“Hm, well, it does appear to be a serious situation. Go ahead.”



"Understood." Yukino moved the laptop over to her seat and began to work on it.

"Kagura Mayo. 15 years old. Starting today, transferred to this academy from Kanagawa Prefecture."

"Mayo-san, is it? That's a cute name."

"Eh!?"

With a glance at the surprised Mayo, Yukino continued. "Height: 155cm. Weight: 46kg. From the top, her three sizes are 90, 56, 83.....90! I'm jealous..."

"Hmph, that'll just make your shoulders hurt."

"Well, that's true..." Mayo, who had just agreed with Haruka, suddenly shook her head. "W-wait! Why does it have that information!?"

Mayo, trying to see the screen, was blocked by Haruka.

"It's confidential. Yukino, continue."

"Blood type: O. Birthday: March 8, Sagittarius. Likes: Reading, Afternoon naps. Dislikes: English, Physics. Favorite Foods: Vanilla ice cream, Sweet bean jelly. Favorite saying: 'gold coins before a cat.' Favorite color: Sepia. ....That's all."

"That's it? Yukino, we're not asking for the profile of some new idol."

"But, Haruka-chan, that's really it."

"Please wait. Kikukawa-san, is that *really* all there is about Kagura-san? If so, this might be an even bigger deal than I expected. She's a huge breasted loli who excites men, she almost got kidnapped by a gangster, while handcuffed she had this and that happen to her, she was captured on video, and due to the shock is suffering from memory loss."

"Please don't talk about that in such a relaxed tone!"

"Now, now, calm down. Here, use this for your tears..."

The President gave her handkerchief to Mayo, who had begun crying. Just what she had been talking about was already a pretty big deal.

"The number one problem is this..." The President took Mayo's hand as she gave back the handkerchief, and examined the handcuffs.

"I wonder what these are. They're not normal handcuffs. This design is a dragon, isn't it."

"Dragon?" Mayo took a closer look at the metal shackles that stole the freedom of her hands. They certainly did seem to be shaped like dragons out of myth and legend. They were shaped so that their great jaws were biting their own tails, thereby completing the circle.

"Of course, those aren't the kind used by police, nor do they seem to be the kind you get from mail order fetish shops. Mayo-san, you really don't have any idea?"

"None."

"Then, what about the parents who handled the transfer paperwork?"

"...I don't have any parents. Everything was handled for me by people from Hoshinomiya."

"In that case, the only people you met directly before transferring were from the Hoshinomiya Foundation. Ah, sorry for making you remember about your parents."

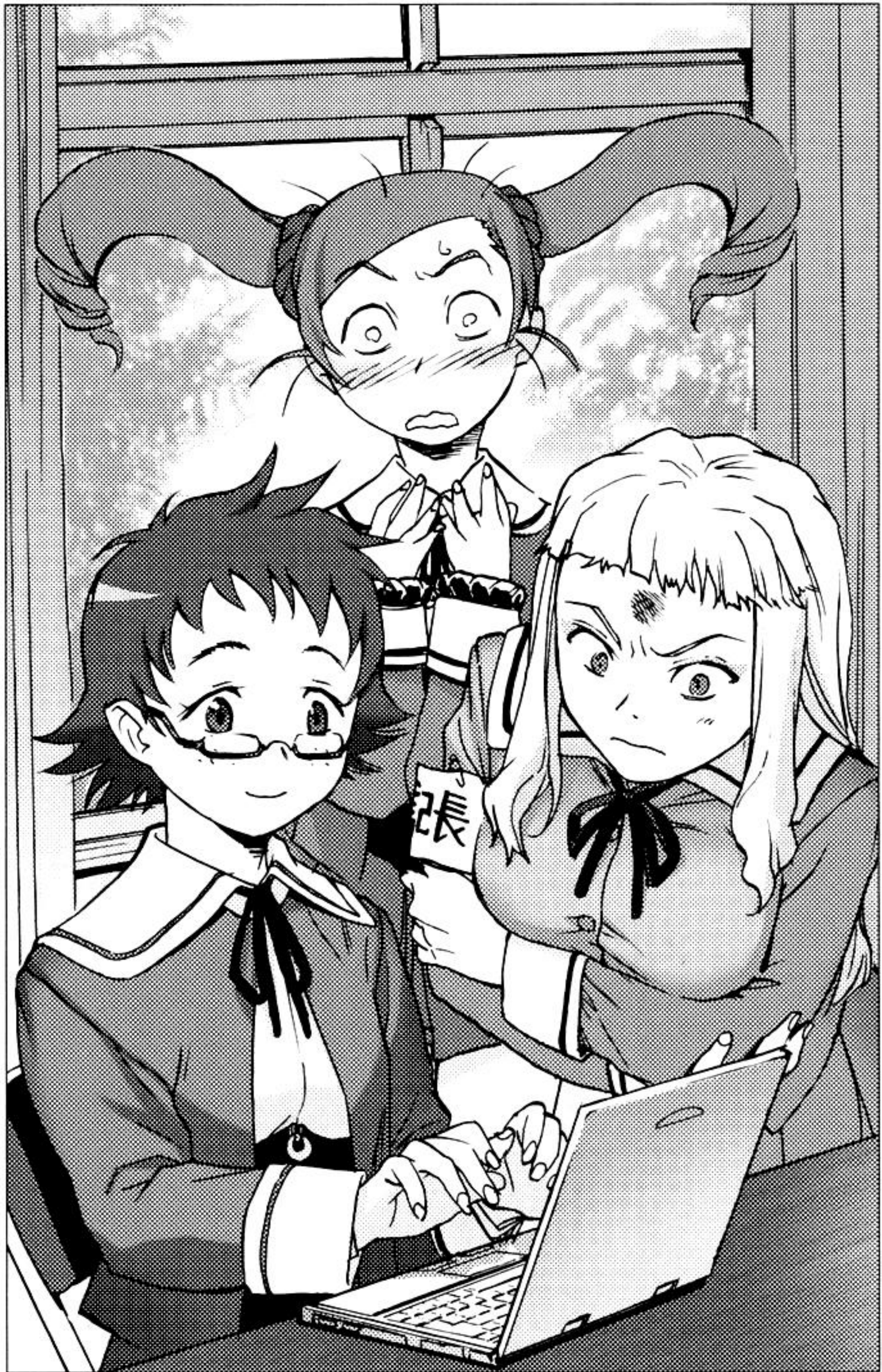
"No, that happened long ago, when I was still a child."

There was nothing to be sad about. So Mayo thought. She didn't even have any memories of her parents, after all.

"President, this isn't the time to be sitting back, relaxing while drinking tea. We need to respond quickly!" Haruka stabbed her finger at the security camera images. The yakuza had split up, and were now busting into one classroom after another.

"It looks like they're searching for something."

"If that's the case, I have an idea what it might be. I thought it might be related to the incident with Mayo-san, but it looks like these uninvited guests are after something else."





# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

At that moment the door opened, and two female students entered.

“Harada-san and Senou-san. Shouldn’t you have evacuated?”

“Well…we were late in getting away, so we figured we’d check on the student council.” The girl called Harada, who wore glasses and had a boyish feel to her, gave a pained smile.

“President Fujino, those people will be up on the second floor soon.”

“Ah!”

“Ah!”

The moment the girl called Senou spoke, Mayo and Haruka exclaimed at the same time.

“Fujino.”

“Shizuru.”

Yes, the lovely student council president’s full name was Fujino Shizuru. Mayo and Haruka had both remembered that the yakuza had asked them where Fujino Shizuru was.

“I totally forgot, because this girl was so suspicious.”

“It’s my fault?”

“Those guys are looking for President Fujino.”

“That’s what I thought. Suzushiro-san, you and the others should hurry and evacuate to the auditorium.”

“Eh? What about you?”

“I suppose I should go meet them.”

As Shizuru rose to her feet softly, the figure she cut was awe-inspiring.

“I’ll come after I take care of it.” Smiling sweetly, Shizuru left the student council room by herself.

The remaining students looked at each other.

“She said she’d take care of it.”

“It sounded like she knows what they want.”

“In which case, that rumor about the President was true.”

“Rumor?”

“Fujino Shizuru Legend Number 18.”

“There’re 18!?”

“No, it’s number 18 of 28. When she was in the west, the parents of a girl she was affectionate with got in a lot of trouble with a loan shark. Shizuru-san, who was a middle-schooler at the time, raided the offices of the yakuza who were backing the operation, so it’s said.”

“Seriously!?”

“Well, it’s a legend.”

“In any case, it’s definite that these guys are serious. They came all this way into the mountains of Hokkaido, after all.”

They could see the yakuza on the laptop monitor. They had already taken out their weapons. In one’s hand was the glitter of a metal blade, the length of which was probably about 20cm. Another one looked to be carrying a pistol.

“Uwa, that’s overdoing it.”

“Not for them. If they get toyed with by an amateur, they won’t be able to live in the underworld. Especially if it’s just one girl.”

“Unlucky, aren’t they?”

“Which side?”

“Of course…”

“Wait, that girl’s not here.” Haruka looked around the room. All that was left was a solitary snack food package. At some point, Kagura Mayo had disappeared.

“Hey, hey, is that girl a transfer student?” Senou Aoi asked with great interest.

“Why was she wearing handcuffs?” asked Harada Chie, who was also full of curiosity.

“That’s what I want to know. Right, Yukino?”

“Yeah. In the end, we never figured it out.”

“Normally, you’d think she ran away. There’re all those yakuza with weapons, after all.”

“As expected, Aoi. A splendid observation.”

“Geez, Chie-chan…”

“No, no, I was praising you. After all, we Fuuka Academy students occasionally forget about that thing called ‘normal’.”

Chie and Aoi, Haruka and Yukino all looked at each other, and thought about Kagura Mayo, who had just appeared today. That’s right, even though she had just transferred, she too was a Fuuka Academy student.



While thinking that this definitely wasn’t normal, Kagura Mayo raced down the hallway.

The Secretary General, who had suddenly headbutted a yakuza.

The Treasurer, who had somehow known stuff like her weight, three sizes, and favorite foods.

And the President, who had gone to meet the yakuza as though she were going to pick spring flowers in the garden.

And lastly, the two who had appeared afterward, looking just like curious spectators.

What kind of nerves did these people have!/? Had living in a place where cell phones didn’t work, separated from all other people, paralyzed their senses!/?

They’re being attacked by yakuza.

The kind of people who didn’t think anything about using violence on others.

They would even kill if they had to.



And just then, the yakuza on the monitor were carrying blades and pistols. The long rodlike object was probably a hunting shotgun. And there were more than ten of those people. Even with some experience, there’s no way you could face them alone.

....then...what can I do?

As she asked herself this, various flashbacks played in Mayo’s mind.

An explosion. A burning car. Crying and screaming classmates. The one who should have helped was paralyzed by fear.

Monster?

Who are you calling that?

Before she who was desperately denying it, men in black suits appeared. The feeling of metal around her wrists...what are these!? Take them off!

“Ow!”

While trying to turn a corner, she lost her balance and fell to her knees. Trying to run without being able to use your hands wasn’t a good idea after all.

Even so, Mayo stood.

She had decided what she had to do.



“Shit. Totally useless.”

The antenna on the LCD was showing 0 lines. There was absolutely no signal. Negishi put his cell phone back in his pocket. Damn hicks.

What’s more, it’s too quiet.

School should have already resumed now that the May holidays were over. Did they use a different calendar in Hokkaido?

“The school can’t be closed, can it?”

No way. Even though the architecture was in old western style, it was definitely well-maintained. Which meant that it was being used. All he could think of was that the students were hiding somewhere.

“Gotou! Toshimura! What’s it look like over there?”

From the hallway the two men answered that no one was around.

If they’d left by the main entrance, the people on watch would have alerted them. Even if they couldn’t use cell phones, they would have fired off a shot.

“So, they must be on the second floor.”

If they were holed up on the second floor, they were like rats in a trap.

“I won’t let that damn bitch get away.”

Negishi was the third generation leader of a famous gang that had controlled a large area in western Japan. No, in truth, the gang had been smashed. The sole reason was Fujino Shizuru.

The only thing that had saved him was, ironically, that Shizuru had been a middle-schooler at the time. No matter how true the story was, no one had believed that a lone girl had attacked and destroyed a gang.

Even so, the fact was that his reputation had been destroyed beyond recoverability.

For the past 3 years, Negishi had devoted his life to getting revenge. At the end of the previous year, an information broker named Yamada had found Shizuru’s location. Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy, in Hokkaido. A private school in the far north of Japan.

Negishi remembered that time clearly. Yamada, who never spoke more than necessary, gave a warning for the first time.

“I won’t beat around the bush. You’d better give it up.”

“Son of a bitch, I paid you 3 million yen, and that’s what you tell me?”

“That’s why I’m telling you. Finding the student named Fujino was 1 million. This warning is worth 2 million.”

Of course, there was no way he’d listen to a warning like that.

With the last of his funds, Negishi had hired soldiers, procured weapons, and set off for Hokkaido. They were after Fujino Shizuru alone. Anyone who got in their way, even if they were a kid, was to be killed without mercy.

“I found her!”

The silence was finally broken. Suddenly, the owner of the voice came tumbling down the stairs, screaming.

“She’s upstairs!”

Negishi and the others started running.

There she was, at the top of the stairs. Clad in a black uniform, the long-haired girl looked down upon the gangsters.

Three years had changed her appearance, but the light that shone deep in her eyes was the same. Frighteningly cold.

“Sadao! Hurry and cut her up!” Negishi shouted at a young underling who was approaching Shizuru’s landing.

However, even for a yakuza, it was impossible to cut an unarmed girl down without hesitating. When he raised his sword to strike, Shizuru was already inside his range. She twisted his wrists, and at the same time took his feet out from under him. Like the previous man, Sadao went tumbling down the stairs, and now his sword was in Shizuru’s hands. It had all happened in an instant.

As the yakuza wondered where in her slender body that power was coming from, Shizuru crossed swords with the yakuza who attacked her, scattering sparks, and and began descending down the stairs in an imposing manner.

“Gotou! Toshimura! Shoot her!” Negishi ordered his dumbfounded underlings to use their guns.

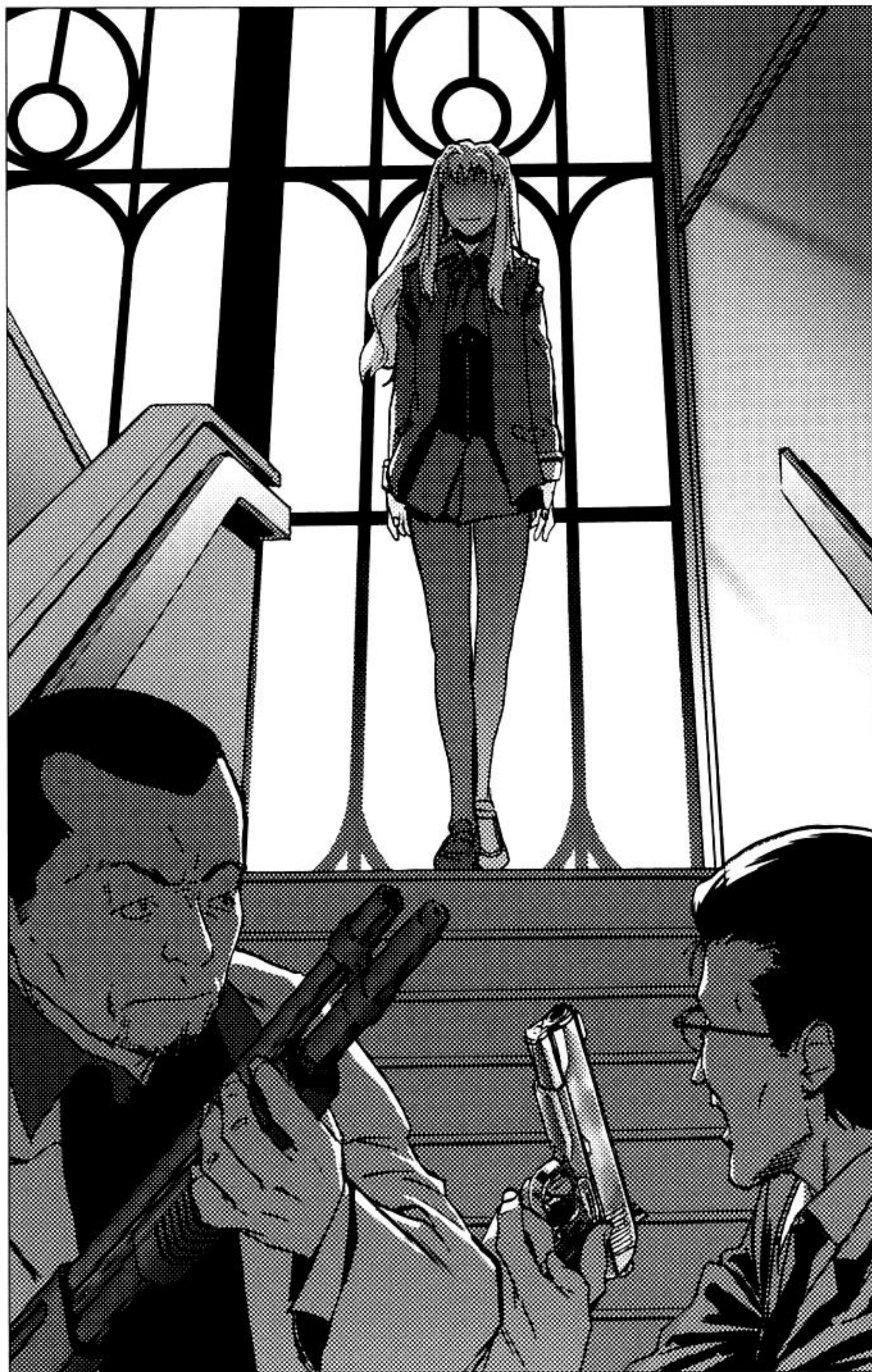
Damn, these bastards! Even though I told them so many times, they still don’t understand how terrifying this kid is.

Yakuza had different rules regarding the use of heavy weapons than did the military. When they want to kill someone, they do it from close range. Certainty was the most important thing. Shooting from long range and possibly missing was what novices did.

However, pride was worth shit here. Negishi gave the order to fire from range.

“Idiots! This damn kid crushed my group *yagoro*!”





What *yagoro* meant, in yakuza speak, was to fight with nothing but a blade. Negishi had told them about it any number of times, but it hadn't set in after all. To think that a girl with a katana had destroyed the offices of the *Bangaichi* Gang... Only Negishi, who had experienced the carnage three years ago could understand it.

"Hand it over, dumbass!"

Negishi grabbed the shotgun that one of his men was holding. It was a pump-action Remington M870. It was ironic that Japanese yakuza were using a gun that had been a hunting gun remodeled for American police use.

However, before Negishi could raise his gun, the sword Shizuru was holding broke. A bullet from the Chinese .45 Gotou was using had struck the base of the sword.

"Haha, this is good. It looks like today you're not using the weapon you had back then."

Believing that he would soon be released from his three year long nightmare, Negishi was filled with joy.

"Die, bitch!"

Without hesitating, he pulled the trigger.



The muzzle of the yakuza's shotgun flashed.

An instant before, something had entered Shizuru's field of vision. Two legs and a flapping skirt hem. A fluttering grey vest and long twin-tails.

Along with the flash of gunpowder, from the barrel of the gun came bullets – 9 bullets of 8.38mm diameter double-ought buckshot were launched at once.

...What is this girl doing? Does she intend to become a shield? I have to stop her from doing anything stupid.

Looking back on it later, it should have been impossible. However, she did it. The bullets never made it.

...What's this? It's like time has stopped.

Shizuru looked in front of her. What had actually stopped were the nine bullets. The lead bullets that should have gone through the girl and hit Shizuru herself had stopped suddenly in the air just a few centimeters ahead.

It seemed the yakuza had also noticed how unusual this was. While crying out strangely, the two who were carrying guns began to fire wildly.

However, those bullets didn't reach her either.

Those bullets, which had enough terrifying force to kill and wound, all stopped as though striking an invisible wall.

"Stop this already!"

The twin-tailed girl – Kagura Mayo – glared at the yakuza, who looked like they wanted to flee, and suddenly they flew up into the air and started slamming into the walls and floor.

"M-monster!"

The yakuza with the shotgun, Negishi, screamed out in fear and hatred, and fled outside.

"A monster, hm..."

Hearing Shizuru's murmur, Mayo's shoulders stiffened and she timidly turned around.



“That’s an impressive power. Just now, that was like what they call supernatural abilities.”

“.....ah, I’ve been exposed. No matter what you call it, I’m a monster. I’m going to have to transfer again... This is the first time it’s happened on the first day. Ahaha.”

Although she was trying to sound cheerful, Mayo’s voice was shaking.

Shizuru saw something shining in her underclassman’s eyes.

“Kagura Mayo-san, I didn’t tell you, did I. There’s no need for you to transfer from Fuuka Academy.”

“Eh?”

“You’ve come all this way, after all. And no one saw you use that power, so there’s no problem, is there?”

While Mayo was wondering what was going on, the girls she’d met in the student council room earlier showed up. Making sounds of “Uhee” and “Kyaa”, Harada Chie and Senou Aoi stepped around the fallen yakuza while coming closer.

“President, you forgot this.”

What Chie was carrying was a singular katana. It seemed that Shizuru had had her favorite sword from the beginning.

“Thank you. This dull thing was useless after all.”

Shizuru tossed aside the broken yakuza sword and took her katana. This high school girl carrying a katana cut a dashing figure. Although it was the sort of thing that you would never normally see, in Fujino Shizuru’s case it made a magnificent picture. The same as when she was sipping tea, there was a certain atmosphere about her.

“Geez, President. You went out empty-handed, so I was a little worried.”

“I apologize for making you worry, Senou-san. I was in a bit of a hurry. But fortunately, I had help.”

With a little glance at Mayo, Shizuru went after the yakuza.

Shizuru’s skill with the sword was certainly extraordinary. It was only a short time, but by looking at the number of fallen yakuza on the floor and stairs you could understand. And what’s more, there was almost no blood, which meant that she had defeated them with the back of her sword. It was the work of a master.

However, was it possible to fight against guns. Especially shotguns?

Close range was one thing, but it couldn’t be possible to defend against bullets fired from a distance, could it?

“There’s no need to worry.” As though knowing what Mayo was thinking, Shizuru smiled sweetly.

Following the yakuza, they went through a student hallway and emerged outside.

As though it had been waiting for them, they heard the sound of an engine starting in the courtyard.

“Over there!”

“They’re running away!”

Chie and Aoi pointed, but the car did not run away.

Kicking up dirt from the lawn, the minivan turned around. This was in order to have room to accelerate. With bull-like force, the car charged towards them!

Although it looked like a normal minivan from the outside, it was a specially designed car that was reinforced with bulletproof glass and armor plating. It would have had no problem taking shotgun blasts. Through the smoked glass, they could see the distorted faces of yakuza who were sure of victory.

“Look out!”

“No, you don’t have to do anything.”

This time, it was Shizuru who stepped in front of Mayo, who was about to unleash her power.

What she had in her hand was, after all, nothing more than a single katana.

How was she going to fight a car with that?

“Well, just watch. Don’t blink, now,” Shizuru said to Mayo, who was at her back.

Though facing a charging car, she took not even one step back. Calmly gripping the katana with her right hand, she gently lowered her hips.

And – the next instant...as the car filled her field of vision, Shizuru’s eyes opened wide.

As her left hand pulled the sheath to her, the naked blade created an arc of light. Leaving behind an afterimage, the blade was returned to its sheath, and in that instant it was over. Truly god-like speed.

The bumper and hood of the car that should have crushed the high school girls separated to the left and right, and the engine and bodyframe inside was split perfectly in two. The two halves of the car sped on as though racing, but soon fell over.

In the world, there are picture books that display cross-sections of all sorts of things, and this scene was as though one of those had come to life. In one half of the car was Negishi, who was gripping the handles with a stupefied expression on his face.

The information broker Yamada’s warning had been right. It seemed that, in the end, this yakuza could not escape from the curse called Fujino Shizuru.

“You certainly tore up the lawn. Well, the people upstairs will handle the clean up, I suppose. They’re the ones who allowed this incursion, after all.”

“As expected,” Chie said while giving a whistle.

“Waa, it’s been a while since I’ve seen the President’s *iai*!” Aoi exclaimed in a carefree tone while clapping her hands.

“Well, I suppose it’s beyond the level of *iai* now...”

Staring at the revealed innards of the car, Mayo was dumbfounded. When the President unsheathed her sword, the car had been at least 10 meters away. The blade shouldn’t have been able to reach, and even if it had, it should have been physically impossible for this to happen. Well, Mayo wasn’t very good at physics, but...

“I suppose this is also a supernatural power. The people in charge of Hoshinomiya call it MiKO, apparently.”

“Miko?”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～



“She read my mind. Telepathy, right?”

“Sorry. But what interests me is that Kikukawa-san could only find out that much.”

“Eh?”

“In other words, we still don’t know who put those shackles on you, or why,” Shizuru said with an apologetic tone.

Mayo herself could still hardly remember anything before she came to Hokkaido.

“I really don’t remember.”

“Well, everyone has things they want to forget. Especially people like us, who’ve been exposed to curious eyes. But, there’s no longer any more need for you to keep transferring because of that. At Fuuka Academy, there are many people with abilities like yours, after all.”

“Many people like me…”

Turning around, Mayo took a better look at the buildings standing in the forest. In places it looked like an old western monastery, in others it looked like the secluded castle of some western noble. It was truly a different world, separated from all normalcy.

“This is….my place.”

Mayo, who had been repeatedly changing schools since she was small, felt something welling up deep in her chest.

“Kagura-san, hold out your hands.”

“Eh, like this?”

“Might as well, since I have it out. This is the first time I’ve seen a case like yours, but it’s better to have freedom of movement, after all.”

As she was told, Mayo held out her hands, chained together.

“Stay like that.”

Shizuru’s hand went to her sword.

Mayo didn’t worry about what could happen. Before Shizuru’s skill, Mayo didn’t have even the slightest doubt, but even so she reflexively closed her eyes at that moment.

There was the sound of the sword clearing its sheath, and at the same time she felt the impact in her wrists.

……?

There was disturbing feeling in her wrists and Shizuru gasped. What happened?

What made Mayo’s eyes fly open as she opened them timidly was the sight of those manacles having stopped that naked blade without any damage. Shizuru’s katana, which had split an armored car in two, had had no effect on them.

“That’s impossible.”

As though she had not even imagined this possibility, Shizuru’s smile disappeared.

“What are those?”

“That’s what I want to know.”

In the first place, even Mayo herself had no idea. Exhausted, Mayo sat down on the lawn with a thump. All she could do was stare fearfully at the metal that bound her.

Ah!

Had it been her imagination? For a moment it had looked as though the carved dragons’ eyes had lit up. Almost as though they were alive.

**To be continued...**



## CHAPTER 2:

"RIVAL WARLORDS"  
OR  
"THE THRILL  
OF LONG LEGS"

真夜が転校した「星之宮風華学園」はタダモンでない方でいっぱい。これには真夜もビックリ。かくいう真夜も「手錠をされたまま転校」というなかなかのツワモノっぷりを発揮した(笑)。

そうそう、今月はもうひとりのヒロイン・天王寺しおんが現れるので請うご期待。「舞・HiME」ファンなら見知ったキャラクターもそくそく登場するので注目!! 物語は壮絶なバトルシーンからスタート!!  
(うーん……)

原作/  
**矢立肇**

企画/  
**サンライズ**

キャラクターデザイン/  
**久行宏和**

著者/  
**伊吹秀明**

イラスト/  
**目黒三吉**

©SUNRISE

# 舞・HiME DESTINY 龍の巫女

## 第二話

「群雄割拠 ～ もしくは脚線上のスリル」

舞・HiME  
サンライズ  
プロジェクト



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“Amazing. There’s nothing left.”

As Mayo approached the stairs, her eyes grew round.

It was definitely here. Just the day before, more than 10 yakuza had lain unconscious in these stairs and this hallway.

They had all been cleaned up, and not even a trace of the battle was left.

“I totally thought it would be closed off now…”

Mayo was imagining a crime scene like those in police dramas. A dramatic scene with lines of “Keep Out” tape everywhere.

However, since yesterday Mayo had not seen even one policeman. Which meant that the more than 10 yakuza who had invaded yesterday had been carried off by the Academy itself.

“It’s just like the President said, this place isn’t normal. …But, the least normal one is the President herself. Yesterday was incredible…”

As though in a trance, Mayo’s head was filled with the scenes of the lovely Student Council President’s exploits.

The yakuza had been repulsed not by the police or even by campus security guards, but by one female student – Fujino Shizuru.

“She just tossed them around like it was nothing, and in the end she went like this…”

Shizuru’s skill at *iai*, which could be called the technique of a god. Trying to imitate it, Mayo lowered her stance.

“Like this!”

The blade had leapt from its sheath, and for just an instant the naked steel could be seen.

“Ow!”

Pain shot through Mayo’s wrists. Her manacles wouldn’t even let her do an imitation.

“Geez, what are these!?”

It was a question she had asked any number of times since yesterday. They were the shackles that had stolen the freedom of her hands since the first day of her transfer. She had no memory of how she’d gotten like that. Even though the yakuza invasion had been taken care of, Mayo’s problem was still unresolved.

“And I thought something would be done when I got here, too… No matter who I ask, no one knows anything, geez…”

Suddenly, Mayo was surprised when she realized that someone had entered her field of vision.

Without her noticing, a female student had come up to the landing, and was now looking up at her.

Semilong red hair and a cardigan. Her mouth gave the impression of a kitten.

*Who’s that? I didn’t notice anyone…*

“There you are. Hey, you’re Fujino’s new toy, aren’t you?”

“By Fujino, you mean the Student Council President? …..what do you mean, toy?”

“Well, no matter how you look at it, those are for dangerous play, aren’t they?”

Pointing at Mayo’s handcuffs, the redhead grinned.

The meaning of ‘dangerous play’ was outside of Mayo’s experience, but she at least understood that she was being made a fool of. She got defensive.

“These aren’t toys, and neither am I! The President was just trying to get them off!”

She shook her hands angrily, and her twintails bounced around in protest.

“Oh, that’s boring.”

“It is not boring! It’s a serious problem!”

She shook her hands again.

“I get it, I get it. I understand that it’s a big deal, but, seriously, how do you go to the bathroom like that?”

“Y-you don’t have to worry about that!”

“I’m into trying new things, you know. I’d like to know for future reference.”

It sounded like she was preparing to do some handcuff play of her own, but Mayo didn’t realize that.

“You ask how……i-it’s spirit!”

“Haa? …..oh, I get it. It’s like this.”

Nodding like she’d been convinced of something, the redhead got a suspicious glint in her eyes.

“Hya!”

Suddenly, Mayo realized that it felt cold ‘down there’. And the feeling she was getting from her ass was…

“Owa!?”

Somehow, the panties Mayo was wearing were swiftly crawling out from under her skirt!

“Hmm…orthodox white…”

The redhead laughed. She was using psychic power to take off Mayo’s panties.

Yes, because she couldn’t use her hands, she had to use the psychic power called psychokinesis or PK. And the redhead also had that power.

“Ku, I won’t just let you.”

“Oh, you’re not bad.”

Mayo used PK to put her panties back, but the redhead started dropping them again.

“Why are you doing this?”

“Because it’s amusing, of course.”

Their invisible powers clashed, and Mayo’s panties started moving up and down in the vicinity of her knees.

*Aah, geez, and for this to be happening here of all places!*

On the same stairs where Fujino Shizuru had fought splendidly with the invaders, another psychic battle was taking place! But, what they were fighting over was… Thinking about that, Mayo’s face got even redder. In one sense, this too was a tension-filled deathmatch.

“I…I won’t lose here!”

“You’re too soft!”

As the light in the redhead’s eyes grew, the equilibrium collapsed and Mayo’s panties suddenly dropped to her ankles.

“Heh heh, it looks like the battle’s over.”

“....Who was too soft, I wonder?”

“What? ....ah, aah....”



The redhead’s voice was suddenly weaker than before. Without noticing, her panties too had been dropped.

Suddenly, there was laughter from the bottom of the stairs. As though she’d seen the whole thing from beginning to end, a female student was clutching her stomach in laughter.

“K-Kuga Natsuki! Of all people…”

The redhead’s face twisted in shame and disgrace. Judging by her reaction, she’d been seen by the one person she’d least wanted to be seen by. Pulling up her striped panties with kitten designs printed on them, she fled from the stairs and vanished. Her agility was like that of a real cat.

The girl who’d been called Kuga kept laughing loudly as though she’d eaten magic mushrooms, her waist-length hair flying about.

“Geez! Don’t laugh so much.”

Mayo’s face was aflame.

“Could it be…the same thing happened to you?”

“S-shut up!”

It was like a signal. Like a toy being switched off, the laughter stopped abruptly.

*Huh? She’s really beautiful.*

After wiping away her tears and fixing all her displaced parts, she had looks that would put a fashion model to shame. A well featured, ‘ice doll’-like beauty. If the situation had been different, Mayo might have tried to get closer to her.

“Well, that was good. I thought you were actually going to start seriously attacking each other there.”

The girl introduced herself as Kuga Natsuki. She was a second-year, one year ahead of Mayo.

“It wasn’t anything like that.”

Remembering, Mayo pulled her panties back up.

“Who was that just now?”

“Her name’s Yuuki Nao. One of this year’s new students.”

“So she’s in the same year as me?”

“There are a lot of strange people in this academy, but she’s number two for this year.”

“I guess so. So who’s number one?”

“Her name is Maya or something. A transfer student, Kagura Maya” (Maya is another way to read Mayo’s name)

“Hmm…Kagura Maya….hm? Isn’t that me!?”

“Well, it’s the first time I’ve seen a student wearing those. Word of yesterday’s incident has already spread all over campus.”

Grinning broadly, Natsuki pointed at Mayo’s handcuffs.

“W-why does everyone go straight to that, \*sniffle\*”

“Aah, I get it, I get it. Don’t cry.”

Natsuki handed her handkerchief to Mayo, who had suddenly started crying.

“And it’s not Maya. Written with ‘truth’ (真) and ‘night’ (夜), it’s read Mayo.”

“Mayo!”

“W-what is it, all of a sudden?”

This time Mayo was surprised.

“.....It’s just personal. Don’t worry about it.”

Mayo would not learn that this cool beauty actually had a severe allergy to mayonnaise until four days, five hours, and six minutes later, but that’s a different story.

“Anyway, those handcuffs must be inconvenient. Has the Principal said anything? You’ve met him, right?”

“Yes, last night.”

Mayo thought back on the night before.



She had had both hopes and fears about her new life.

The move from Kanagawa to Hokkaido. The transfer to a new academy with dormitories. The scale was large, but to Kagura Mayo, who had already transferred schools seven times, this eighth transfer should have had the same formalities and should have gone on without anything unusual happening.

However - on the first day, there’d been an ‘incident’.

And – Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy had not been ‘a normal academy.’

Mayo had been called to the Chairwoman’s office a few hours after the invasion had ended and the sun was setting. In a room with showy windows and chandeliers, Mayo had met the Chairwoman of Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy, Himeno Fumi, and the Principal, Kanzaki Rei.

If her hopes and fears had been given human form, they would surely have been these two people. They were that much polar opposites, Mayo thought.

Wearing a light colored suit, Himeno Fumi looked like she was still in her early twenties. Rounded short hair and a voice like honey. The smile that sometimes touched her lips was soothing, and at the same time seemed to conceal secrets.

The man wearing a black double-breasted suit, Kanzaki Rei, looked to be in his thirties. His shaved head and hard features were so overbearing that Mayo thought he should have been the one to deal with the yakuza.

However, the yakuza had been taken care of by the Student Council President, Fujino Shizuru.

“I’ve heard all about today’s incident from Fujino-san. I think that you already know about this academy’s special characteristics, Kagura-san…”

“I do. No, I understand, Chairwoman. Hoshinomiya Fuuka Private Academy. However, it’s actually a secret organization for the training of people with superpowers! After graduating, students go to work as secret agents for the government and international organizations, doing amazing things all over the world! It’s so cool!”

“Stop right there, Kagura-san.”

Fumi gently stopped Mayo’s rampage.

“Eeh, it’s not?”

“This academy is not especially for the purpose of training spies. Based on their hopes, abilities, and powers, there have been some who’ve done that, but that’s only a small handful of our graduates. The true purpose of this academy is to give people with special powers like you support in the world.”

“Support?”

Fumi continued by telling Mayo that the number of teenagers exhibiting superhuman abilities had been increasing. Because of their powers, many had suffered, and some had become criminals.

“For the sake of those people and for the world as a whole, this is not a good thing. To teach control over one’s powers and psyche, as well as ways to live in society – that is the principle and purpose upon which this academy was founded.”

“Of course, thinking about the effect on society, neither the existence of people with superhuman abilities nor that of this academy can be made public.”

The Principal, Kanzaki Rei, spoke.





“Well, it’s true that this academy is a sort of secret organization. To outsiders you should look like normal students, so take that into account.”

“Yes...”

As Mayo was about to ask why they were talking about secrets and outsiders in the mountains, she realized that that was the very reason the academy was here.

However, there were still people who had busted in, despite the academy being in such a remote location.

“Umm...about today...”

“Ah, those men. I imagine it was quite a surprise for you, but you should understand that this was nothing more than an irregular incident arising from special circumstances. Measures have already been taken, and the cleanup is being handled from here, so there’s no need for you to worry. You can forget about it.”

Mayo didn’t feel like asking what was meant by ‘cleanup.’ Because it was a secret, that probably meant that the media and the police were not aware of it. Which meant that this Fuuka Academy had that kind of power.

“Now now, that’s enough for today.”

The Chairwoman’s voice relieved the tension in the atmosphere.

“Kagura-san, you’re probably tired from your long trip. I’ll have someone show you to the dorm. Your things have already been sent to your room.”

“Thank you. I’m actually really exhausted.”

Perhaps because of what had happened since she’d transferred, or perhaps because of her lack of memories, Mayo didn’t care right now about the various things that were still left unanswered.

Her nervous tension took a sudden nose dive. She suddenly felt all the exhaustion that had built up in her body. Her number one priority right now was to get to sleep. She could take a shower in the morning.

“One last thing, Kagura-san. At this academy you have many ‘comrades.’ No doubt you’ve experienced a great deal of hardship due to your power, but please understand that you’re not alone.”

Having no family, Mayo had been alone for as long as she could remember. She’d been transferred over and over again between institutions and schools. On the way to her room, a single tear rolled down her cheek.

Because of all this, she had forgotten the questions she had wanted to ask but hadn’t. In the Chairwoman’s room had been Himeno Fumi and Kanzaki Rei. However, she had had the feeling that there had been a third person in the room, who had been both unseen and unheard.

If Fumi was hope and Rei was uneasiness given human form, then what exactly did the third person represent? As she slept like a log, that question vanished entirely from her mind.



“Comrades? Well, the people here mostly come from similar circumstances, so I suppose that’s true.”

“Isn’t it, isn’t it?”

Mayo took Natsuki’s hand, seeking agreement.



“But do comrades play with each other’s panties?”

“Ua!”

Faced with Natsuki’s teasing tone, Mayo dropped her hand.

“Even though it’s to protect the secret, we’re stuck up here in the mountains. People like Yuuki Nao who do stupid things out of boredom aren’t uncommon. What’s more…”

“What’s more?”

“Well, you’ll understand soon. …Anyway, about those. Did the Chairwoman give up on them too?”

Natsuki looked at Mayo’s handcuffs. Since yesterday, the dragon-shaped manacles had stolen the freedom of her hands.

“Hmm, that’s right. She said that they aren’t the normal handcuffs that the police use. ‘If Fujino-san’s MiKO power won’t work on them, there’s nothing that can be done’, she said.”

“What’s your impression of the Chairwoman? Don’t be fooled by her warm tones.”

“I feel that way too. By the way, what’s this miko power? Is it the same as superpowers?”

“Don’t know.”

“No way…”

“A secret organization wouldn’t be that generous with information, would it? Shizuru might know something, though.”

“Shizuru…the Student Council President. That’s right! If I ask that wonderful President, she’ll tell me everything, won’t she?”

“Wait.”

Mayo was stopped by Natsuki.

“I see. So that’s how it is. Even Shizuru couldn’t cut those handcuffs…”

Suddenly, Natsuki looked happy.

“That’s right, but…”

“I’ll do something about them.”

“Eh? …..wa!!”

Suddenly there was a revolver in Kuga Natsuki’s right hand. It was beyond the level of a quick-draw. It was almost like magic.

“Don’t worry. It’s just a toy. However, it’s more dangerous than the real thing. Hold out your hands.”

“W-wait! You’re going to do it here?”

“Don’t you want to be free of those quickly? Don’t move.”

In her head, Mayo kept telling herself to be prepared. Although she thought that in the police dramas she’d seen before, there had been scenes where handcuffs had been shot off.

Natsuki put the muzzle of her gun right up against the chain.

“Here we go.”

Before she’d finished speaking, a tremendous noise pierced Mayo’s ears. At the same time, a bright flash and a shock. She didn’t understand what had happened. The only thing she felt was an instinctual sense that she’d just ‘faced death’.

“I-I felt something go past my head.”

“Me too.”

The two sat down slowly, like their hips were being taken out from under them.

Natsuki’s bullet had definitely struck the chain, but had been repelled without damaging it. The ricocheting bullet had passed right by Mayo’s temple, hit the wall and the ceiling, and had flown over Natsuki’s head.

“Haha……that might have been scarier than yesterday,” said Mayo, who had stopped the bullets from a yakuza’s shotgun in midair. The fear had gradually come afterward.

“I should have known this would happen…… Sorry.”

“Eventually they’ll put up signs saying ‘Use of superpowers forbidden in the hallways.’ Ah, was that a Miko power just now?”

“No idea. If it was, I suppose it’s not a particularly impressive power.”

“That’s not true. Even the President failed, after all.”

The sight of Fujino Shizuru slicing the yakuza car in half with one stroke was still burned into Mayo’s eyes. She certainly didn’t think that that was unimpressive.

“T-that’s right. Shizuru couldn’t do it either. Ha, hahaha…. W-why are you looking at me like that? You’re thinking, ‘What’s up with this person?’ aren’t you?”

“I just figured something out.”

“What?”

“It’s a secret.”

Before she’d transferred to Fuuka Academy, Mayo had already been thinking about how not to stand out. Even though her worries should have vanished after arriving at an academy filled with superpowered people, she had ended up getting a lot of attention.

The unidentifiable manacles were the major reason for that, of course, but it seemed that there was another powerful attractive force at work.

The Student Council President, Fujino Shizuru. On her first day, she had become heavily involved with her. People like Yuuki Nao from before and this Kuga Natsuki, hearing about her involvement with the President, would become entangled with her. So Mayo thought.



Suddenly hearing a scream, the two stood.

“What was that just now?”

“Nonomiya Kiyone…”

Natsuki said the name of the person who was likely the owner of that scream.

To be accurate, it had not been a normal scream.

It had been a telepathically projected ‘cry of the soul.’ The scenery the sender was seeing had also come as visual information. Many trees. A strangely shaped bronze statue.

“The back garden.”

Natsuki took off running.

While thinking, ‘why me too?’ Mayo followed after her.

“How many people are in this academy?”

“Why do you ask?”

“I just thought that there aren’t a lot of students around.”

“Spoon-bending ‘performers’ aside, do you think that people with superpowers are just rolling around? In all the classes, there are probably about a hundred.”

“That’s a lot, though!”

“Is it? I suppose. The reason that you don’t see a lot of students is probably that the curriculum is small and the campus is absurdly huge.”



Like Natsuki had said, the garden of Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy was large. Rather than a garden, it was like a park. It took the two a while to get to the scene even after leaving the school building.

“Kuga-san, over there!”

“Hm, Kiyone?”

A row of Japanese spruces lined the garden. From one of those branches, a female student was dangling.

“Hii~!!”

“Calm down, she’s not being hung.”

The rope was tied not around her neck, but around both ankles. She was hanging upside down. Because of this, her short uniform skirt was hanging down, and they could see her ass and light blue underwear.

Natsuki and Mayo approached to help, but upon noticing them the girl let out another scream. This time it was an actual scream that struck their ears. Mayo covered her ears because of the volume, but in the next instant the girl had vanished, and only the rope was hanging there.

“Ah! That was teleportation just now, wasn’t it?”

“That’s right, Nonomiya Kiyone can teleport, too.”

“Do you know her?”

“A little. But, even though she can only teleport short distances, how did she end up in that situation?”

“Hmm...”

As the two pondered it, the answer came from an unexpected direction. From behind a nearby bronze statue, a new student appeared.

“If she loses consciousness, even a teleporter can’t get away, Kuga-san.”

Short hair kept neat with small pins and small titanium-framed glasses made this girl’s image impressive.

“Consciousness.....I suppose that’s true. Did you see who did it?”

“I didn’t see it. But I understand at least that much, after all.”

“I-I see. ....I’ll introduce you. This is...”

“Kagura Mayo-san, right? You transferred yesterday.”

Unlike Natsuki, the glasses girl pronounced Mayo’s name correctly.

“Oh, you knew already.”

“This academy is a closed space, after all. If you think about our abilities, it’s only natural.”

“I know, I know.”

Natsuki made a face.

“And this uptight looking girl is...”

“Shion-chan!”

Suddenly, Mayo leapt towards the glasses girl and grabbed her hands.

“My name is definitely Shion, but I don’t think we’ve met....hm?”

The girl called Shion was surprised at this. Lowering her glasses a little, she narrowed her eyes.

“I knew it, you’re Shion-chan!”

“Even if you say that...”





Trying to get a better look at Mayo, Shion brought her face closer. Perhaps because their focal points were different, they got to the point where their noses were almost touching.

“Mmm♥”

“!!”

Just like that, Mayo covered Shion’s lips with her own.

“W-what are you two doing!?” Natsuki shouted, surprised.

“For two girls to be kissing, are you perverts!?”

“That’s terrible, calling us perverts. We’ve done this many many times, after all.”

“M-many times...!?”

“And then I’d put beetles down her clothes. Shion-chan was such a crybaby, her face would be covered with tears.”

“Well, most people would cry after something like that. You’re surprisingly cruel, you know. ....Wait a minute! When was this!?”

“When? It was when we were children. About four or five.”

Hearing that, Natsuki let out a relieved breath. Perhaps she had been imagining highschool girls who kissed every day and stuck beetles in each other’s panties.

“So you two are childhood friends?”

“Not at all!”

Holding a hand to her lips, the flushed Shion plainly denied it.

“I don’t know this girl at all.”

“But didn’t you just say that you know all about her?”

“That’s about yesterday’s incident. I’ve never met you in person. I’ll be sure to remember from now on that Kagura Mayo is a very over-familiar person.”

“No way...”

“Thinking we were childhood friends, there must be something wrong with your memory. You probably just have the wrong person,” Shion stated, pushing up her glasses with a finger. She was more full of confidence than Nicolaus Copernicus presenting the heliocentric model.

“My name is Tennouji Shion. It’s an uncommon name, but there are probably several people with it in Japan. I came to Hokkaido from Gifu last spring. Like you, I was scouted by Hoshinomiya.”

“That’s how it is. It was quite an introduction, but let’s return to the topic at hand.”

It looked like Mayo still had some doubts, but Natsuki moved ahead. After all, they didn’t have time to be talking about the past.

“We were talking about who did that to Nonomiya Kiyone.”

“Let me give it a try.”

Shion placed her hand on the trunk of the tree Kiyone had been hanging from.

“What’s she doing?”

“Psychometry. It’s one of Shion’s specialties. She can gather information from the tree.”

“Ohh, that’s pretty convenient.”

“Shh. Let her focus.”

“No, I’m already done.”

Shion removed her hand.

“It was the Athletics Club.”

“Fast as expected. ....The Athletics Club, huh? I figured it was probably them. Before they get their spirits up, why don’t we swiftly attack and crush them.”

“Um, Kuga-san, I don’t understand...”

Mayo sought an explanation from Natsuki, who was holding her chin and muttering to herself.

“Oh, the Athletics Club is a club that does stuff like basketball and baseball and kendo.”

“I understand that much! Huh, why is something like that...?”

“Well, I suppose it’s one of the academy’s special characteristics. We have normal training and physical education, but there are also clubs.”

“But, why is the Athletics Club committing acts of violence? And talking about ‘crushing them’ and such sounds kind of dangerous...”

“I suppose. The quick explanation is that it’s kind of like the Warring States Era.”

“Ha?”

“Not everyone who had superhuman abilities tries to hide in a small corner of society. There have also been those who, before coming here, thought of themselves as conquerors and such in this tiny world. It shouldn’t be strange that there are still people who feel that way.”

“Haa...”

“And whenever three or more humans gather, they split into political factions. It’s sad, but in that respect at least we are the same as normal humans.”

“Hmm....”

Mayo tried to cross her arms, but her shackles got in the way and she let out a groan.

“So, in other words, it’s like this: The student who was just hanging right now is a member of Kuga-san’s group, and the culprits are the Athletics Club. You’re planning to go take revenge on the Athletics Club right now. By the way, how many people are in your group?”

“Well...”

Natsuki deliberately averted her eyes.

“Four, I think...”

“Four! Only four!?”

“No, probably three. She most likely won’t come back.”

Shion looked at the branch Nonomiya Kiyone had been hanging from.

“Umm...four minus one is three, so...”

On her fingers, Mayo counted off Natsuki, Shion, and herself.

“Ehh!? Me too!?”

“From here it’s not numbers that matter, but having mighty warriors. Kiyone was the kind of person who’d run away after having her panties seen, but Kagura Mayo here shouldn’t be fazed by panties...”

“**WA!**”

“I saw them from underneath, after all.”

Sweat started running down Mayo’s face. In truth, Nao had been on the landing and Natsuki had been below her. From the positioning, it shouldn’t have been possible to see Mayo (much less inside her skirt), but Natsuki had already taken the pulse of the situation.

“Well, do you understand the situation?”

“Uu....I don’t really want to understand...”

“Kuga-san’s nonsense aside, it’s not as though you’re not involved, Kagura-san.”

“Even you, Shion-chan! I just transferred yesterday.”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“Don’t call me –chan. Listen…”

Ignoring Natsuki asking what she meant by ‘nonsense’, Tennouji Shion continued.

“Just as Kuga-san said, it’s true that there was a time when the students in this academy gathered around those with strong powers and engaged in factional rivalries that were similar to the Warring States Era. However, if you investigate, you’ll find out that the past two years have been comparatively peaceful. It seems that this peace is due in large part to the Student Council fulfilling its role. Or to be more accurate, due to one power inside the Student Council.”

“One! Is that…”

“Yes, Fujino Shizuru-san. Soon after she entered the academy, something happened that was similar to the Battle of Sekigahara that ended the Warring States Era. Emerging as the victor, she became the Student Council President while still a first-year, and has continued in that position to this day.”

“That’s amazing! I want to read that part of Japanese history!”

“However, the peaceful Edo Period ended after two years with the arrival of the black ship. The black ship called Kagura Mayo.”

“That’s sounds important……eh!? Why am I the black ship!? I haven’t done anything! I’ve never met Commodore Perry, and it should be fine for the Japanese to eat whales!”

“Whales aside, the problem is those manacles. The President tried to cut them but couldn’t, right?”

“Haaa?”

“It’s said that an embankment can collapse from a hole dug by one ant. It’s the one opening shown by Fujino Shizuru, who until now has been perfect in absolutely everything. This sensitive academy is reacting to that.”

“It’s too sensitive!”

“You were the catalyst of this situation. Take responsibility for it.”

Having been silent until now, Natsuki drew closer.

“Uu…I didn’t even do anything…”

Mayo was at a loss. She had dimly realized that this Fuuka Academy revolved around Fujino Shizuru. However, to think that it was such an exaggerated situation….

“Kagura-san, please continue to pretend like we’re having a falling out between allies.”

Shion sounded as indifferent as ever.

“But, I’m not your ally in the first place…”

“We’re surrounded.”

“!”



“Three in front, four in back, one in the trees.”

“Hm, three against eight, huh?”

“Umm…can I go over there?”

“Decide after getting a look at their faces.”

It came quickly. The Athletic Club, wanting to take down Natsuki’s group before they could counterattack, took the initiative. They might have been using Nonomiya Kiyone to lure Natsuki and the others out from the beginning.

“There.”

From the brush around the base of one of the relief statues that dotted the garden, a figure appeared.

“Ah, it’s a boy!”

“What, are men that rare?”

“But I thought this was a girls’ school.”

“It’s 7:3 in favor of girls, I guess. But gender doesn’t matter. What matters in this academy is power.”

“That’s right!”

The boy’s voice interrupted them. Although it sounded hot-blooded, the voice was a little distorted. The speaker was wearing a kendo uniform.

“Power is everything! In this academy that trains people to become conquerors of the world, the ones with power should rule!”

“Takeda! You’re being an idiot again!”

“Kuga! Today we’ll decide the sexes! Wait, I don’t mean between men and women……I mean, my feelings for you…”

“Enough! Shut up already!”

Natsuki began a fierce battle of words with the kendo uniform wearing man called Takeda.

“Uwa, it’s like a lovers’ quarrel. ....Ha, could this be a diversion?”

*No, it’s not strategy, he’s just an airhead.*

Mayo heard Shion’s voice – no, thoughts – inside her head. Telepathic communication. Mayo quickly tuned herself in to it.

*Kuga-san will keep him occupied while preparing to attack. Kagura-san, please erect a shield behind us.*

*Shield?*

*Just imagine a large shield. It’s been proven that your power is strong enough to stop bullets.*

*I understand. I’ll give it a try.*

In the end, without knowing what was what, Mayo got dragged into the battle.

The Athletics Club group had three, including Takeda, in the front. Then there were the four jersey-wearing ones hidden in the shadows to the rear that Shion had sensed. They were the main force. While Natsuki and Takeda were continuing their lovers’ quarrel, the encircling net was definitely being tightened. Falling leaves from a spruce tree were stirred by the wind. The battle began with one gust of wind.

In an instant, those few falling leaves became a thousand. Those conifer leaves attacked like a thousand sharp needles.

However, they were all stopped in midair by the invisible wall that Mayo had erected. So great was the number of leaves that they obstructed the sun, casting a shadow upon them.

Realizing they wasn’t making any progress, the enemy reconfigured the fleet of needles into a sharp cone shape that started spinning like a drill. Sparks began to fly from this battle of psychokinetic power.

*Good, hold it like that. Shion, tell me the position of the hidden one.*

*On a branch in the tree straight above.*

Once again, Natsuki summoned a revolver. Even though she fired without really aiming, the archer fell out of the tree. She herself had said that it was a toy more dangerous than the real thing. In truth, that’s exactly what it was. Although it could fire real bullets, it could also project her psychic energy in the form of bullets. It was possible for her to control her power at will.

“He’s only unconscious.”

She informed the enemy’s allies that she hadn’t killed him.



“Come and attack without fear.”

“You’re underestimating us!”

From bushes to the left and right, men holding bamboo swords leapt out. It was a suicide attack where even if one were defeated the other would be able to strike, but Natsuki was a step ahead. With the sound of gunfire, the two men both fell at once. In her left hand, she was holding a second gun.

“Kuga!!”

Without hesitating, Natsuki shot the charging, screaming Takeda as well. However...

“What!?”

“Hahahaha! My psychic swordsmanship is invincible!

Somehow, Takeda was charging while deflecting bullets with his bamboo sword! Natsuki leapt back, dodging the tip of a downward slash. A second, a third. Her long hair was streaming wildly.

Her hair had been that long since she’d entered middle-school, but that was when she’d realized that the male students were always staring at her. Fortunately, due to her cool appearance and blunt speech, few boys around her went after her directly, but it was still annoying. By the time her ‘power’ had awakened, it had already become too much. Because of that, she had been relieved when the Hoshinomiya organization had contacted her.

However, there had been a man like Takeda Masashi. In one word, he was simple. Because of that, no matter how much Natsuki rejected him, abused him, or defeated him in superpower battles, he never gave up.

Natsuki’s back struck a tree. She’d finally been cornered.

“This is it, Kuga!”

“Stay away, you’re too damn hot!”

“Last year, in the fall when I suffered my 32nd consecutive loss to you, I shaved off my eyebrows and secluded myself in the mountains. Hokkaido’s winter was harsher than I’d imagined. The wind on my face was so cold that it hurt, and there were any number of times when I almost froze to death buried in snow up to my waist. When I went down to the river to hunt for food, I encountered a brown bear that tried to kill me, but it was no match for I who had cast aside my youthful emotions and trained....fugah!”

Having spoken all at once without pausing for breath, Takeda’s voice suddenly stopped. Holding a hand to his mouth, he started gagging.

*Shion!?*

*I didn’t do anything.*

What Takeda spat from his mouth were leaves from a spruce tree. At some point, a clump of them had been stuffed down his throat. Not only was Takeda on his knees coughing, but there were also a large quantity of leaves fallen around Natsuki and Shion.

“Mayo!”

Natsuki looked over at the new student who had been guarding against the enemy attack from the rear.

“I’m tired of this.”

“Tired of what....Wah!?”

Looking in Mayo’s direction, Natsuki’s eyes went wide. Floating in the air were not only leaves from the spruce tree, but the four jersey wearing men as well.

“Maybe I’ll send these guys flying to Russia...”

Mayo sounded half as though she were playing for fun. The other half sounded dangerous, like she might actually do it.

*What the hell is going on here?* Natsuki asked herself.

Kagura Mayo. After hearing about yesterday’s incident, she’d done some investigating. When she’d met her, she’d been a restless girl who was always laughing or crying, but also honest. If she hadn’t been, she probably wouldn’t have come this far normally. Natsuki thought there had been nothing missed in their initial meeting.

No, that’s what she had thought.

Was the Mayo here the same Mayo who had been with them up until now? It wasn’t just the strength of her power. It was how she was using it. It felt like she had such enormous power that she didn’t know what to do with it.

“Damn you!”

While still coughing, Takeda stood and raised his shinai.

“Take this!”

He closed the short distance to Mayo at a run, and with a fierce shout brought his sword slashing down. It was a very straightforward attack. The spirit filled shinai should have been able to smash a large boulder into pieces. However...

“Ku.....My psychic swordsmanship....”

Takeda clenched his teeth. The attack that should have been a sure kill had been stopped by Mayo holding her handcuffs over her head. What’s more, his shinai had broken and gone spinning off like a paper toy.

“Che. No good at all. That person yesterday was much better. ....I know, I’ll return these to you.”

“Uwa!”

Mayo tossed the four floating guys at Takeda one by one. With no trace of his original vigor, Takeda was soon crawling around to escape. Running away from his allies who were being casually tossed around, he hid behind a large relief statue.

“You don’t know when to give up, do you. I’ll crush you all at once.”

This time the relief statue itself started to move from the earth. It was a five meter wide marble statue. It floated up more than three meters. Truly terrifying psychokinetic power.

“Stop, Mayo!”

“Ara? Wouldn’t you prefer it if this kind of guy disappeared, Kuga-senpai?”

“Well, that’s true, but...”

Natsuki looked over at Takeda, who was crying out her name.

“But even that guy is a ‘comrade’. Besides, I should apologize for dragging you into this so suddenly. I didn’t explain it very well, but these campus battles are more like a game, we don’t actually kill each other.....hey, are you listening!?”

“.....Eh? What was that?”

Mayo had been looking at her floating statue rather than listening to what Natsuki had been saying.

“Well, whatever. It’s too much trouble.”

As though it were nothing more than a sugar cube, the large marble statue suddenly burst into pieces.

That this would become the prelude to the next incident, no one knew then.





“Ah, Kuga-senpai. Thanks for today, even though I don’t really remember it. Oh, you shouldn’t use your power in the hallways~ Hya!”

While she was talking, Mayo suddenly fell over in a showy fashion.

With her arms and legs restricted, it wasn’t surprising for her to fall down like that.

As always, her hands were bound by her manacles. And coiled around her legs were white panties. Due to the over-abuse of them that she couldn’t remember, the elastic had finally snapped.

**To be continued...**

“Well, if it isn’t Natsuki. It’s been a while.”

As soon as the three had snuck back into the school building, a voice had called them from the hallway. With her characteristic Kansai accent, it was the Student Council President, Fujino Shizuru.

“I was worried that you might have dropped out.”

“You’re one to talk. You’re the one who was responsible for ‘that’.”

“Don’t be so mean. If you had surrendered quietly, that wouldn’t have.... No, no, perhaps you liked it.”

“Shut up! If an outsider heard you, they’d get the wrong idea! That’s right, I won’t lose next time. I’ve acquired a secret weapon for use against the Student Council.”

“That sounds dangerous. And the academy had finally become peaceful too...”

“How was that disturbance yesterday peaceful?”

“That was special. ....Ah, Kagura-san is here too. Perfect timing. I was thinking of inviting you for tea as an apology for yesterday.”

“What!?”

Brief silence. During that time, Tennouji Shion examined both sides.

Fujino Shizuru. The Student Council President who was already a living legend. She seemed like a gentle girl, but she wasn’t someone you could deal with by ordinary means. If you let your guard down, she’d tear out your liver.

On the other side, Kuga Natsuki. The campus was once again plunging into a ‘Warring States Era’, and she had declared war on its center, the Student Council.

But, what was this? It was a conversation similar to the one she’d had while being approached by the boy named Takeda. Maybe Kuga Natsuki was just popular.

And then there was Kagura Mayo. The most mysterious existence. Was the sudden change in her power just now an accident? Or had it been her true face peeking out from behind a mask? Either way, they would have to exercise caution when dealing with this double-edged sword. For example, right now...

“Some rice cakes were sent from my household, so why don’t we have them with the tea?”

“Rice cakes!”

Suddenly, Mayo jumped up.

“I love those! I could eat them for meals three times a day!”

“Hey, how do you make a meal out of those, wait!”

Seeing Mayo running over to Shizuru, Natsuki called out hastily.



Warring States Era - The time (from 1478 to 1605) when Japan was split into warring factions. Also known as Sengoku Jidai or the Feudal Era (as in, the time Inuyasha takes place). However, Warring States Era makes more sense than "Feudal Era" in this context as it places emphasis on the warring factions.

Battle of Sekigahara - Major battle between the last two factions of the Warring States Era. Only one emerged victorious (that of Tokugawa Ieyasu, who then became ruler of all of Japan).

Edo Period - A time of prolonged peace (1605 to 1868) when the Tokugawa family ruled Japan.

Commodore Perry/Black Ships - Commodore Matthew Perry was an American who arrived at Japan with a fleet of Black Ships and forced the Tokugawa family to open Japan to trade with the United States. Opposition to this among the populace led to a rebellion that overthrew the Tokugawa family (thus ending the Edo Period).



『第一回ノベルジャパン大賞』受賞作発表!!

HOBBY JAPAN SPECIAL ISSUE  
MONTHLY MAGAZINE OF ROMANTIC NOVELS  
(COMEDY AND TRAGEDY, FANTASY AND MYSTERY,  
JUVENILE AND YOUNG ADULT, LOVE STORY AND...)

ノベルジャパン

# Novel JAPAN

月刊ホビージャパン  
6月号増刊

6

Jun.2007/vol.8

PRICE:880YEN

表紙イラスト:久行宏和

舞・HIME DESTINY  
龍の巫女  
伊吹秀明&目黒三吉

シリーズ最新作絶好調連載中!

好評小説連載

榊 一郎

「フェイク・フェイク」

ひかわ 玲子

「ゴッデス!」

五代 ゆう

「アレクシオン・サーガ」

佐々原 史緒

「日本上空いらっしやいませ!」

葛西 伸哉

「ブレスレスハンター」

沖田 栄次

「激闘! クイーンズブレイド」

寺田 ともり

「セーラ外伝 超鋼聖女ベッキー」

野崎 透

「装甲騎兵ボトムズ コマンドフォーク」

HJ文庫注目の最新刊!

「おまかせ退魔! シールドガールズ」

明貴 美加 & すずき あきら

「ピンヅメ乙女ゴコロ」

雨森 麻社 & 成瀬 裕司

巻頭特集

小説化! コミック化! 話題騒然の美闘士バトル!!

## クイーンズブレイド

特別付録 透ける! クイーンズブレイド下敷き



# 第三話

「消された捜査線」

EDITOR: RIS

CHAPTER 3:  
THE VANISHED LEAD



## 舞-HiME DESTINY 龍の巫女

学園最強。黒衣の戦姫、藤乃静留……。

THE ACADEMY'S STRONGEST.  
THE WAR PRINCESS IN BLACK,  
FUJINO SHIZURU.....

原作／

矢立 肇

企画／

サンライズ

キャラクターデザイン／

久行宏和

著者／

伊吹秀明

イラスト／

目黒三吉

© サンライズ

徐々にあらわれはじめた真夜の  
強大な能力。

そしてそれを見計らったかの  
ように真夜に接触してくる学園の  
生徒達。

これは、過去にあったと伝えら  
れる「学園抗争」の再燃に繋  
がるのか？

……でもとりあえず真夜ちゃん、  
手錠をなんとかしたいよねえ。



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

There is a saying: “What happens twice will happen thrice.”

The first time was when she had assisted the Student Council President against the yakuza.

The second time, which she wanted to forget but couldn’t, had been the life-or-death battle with Yuuki Nao.

And the third time – on those same school stairs, Kagura Mayo once again encountered an enemy.

Semilong red hair, a cardigan worn over a school uniform; at first a surprised expression that quickly turned into a catlike grin.

Everything was the same as it had been yesterday. No, there was one thing different.

“Ah! That’s no fair!”

Mayo pointed at Nao on the landing. She had seen that Nao was wearing gym shorts under her skirt.

Yesterday, Mayo and Nao had waged a shameful and terrifying battle on these stairs, each using superhuman abilities to pull down the other’s panties. In a sense, it had truly been a life-or-death struggle.

“Unfair? But I have PE next, after all. ....Besides, aren’t you hiding something?”

“I-I’m not hiding anything!”

Mayo quickly pushed down her skirt.

“.....No, not that. Like, the reason you’re wearing those handcuffs.”

It had been three days since she had transferred, but Mayo had still not been able to remove her manacles.

“That’s what I want to know.”

“You broke out of a prison or something, didn’t you?”

“Me!? Why!?”

“Because of the yakuza disturbance two days ago, most people didn’t notice, but it seems there was something like an explosion nearby. It looks like the faculty thought that that was a bigger deal than the yakuza. Aren’t you related to that somehow?”

“An explosion?”

Mayo tilted her head in thought. Come to think of it, she seemed to remember hearing a loud noise before arriving at the academy. Because she had still been walking in a daze then, she hadn’t known whether or not it was real. Ironically, what had brought her back to reality had been those handcuffs.

“The way I see it, the incident with the yakuza was used as camouflage. After all, if the academy had been serious, the yakuza would never have gotten close. Right?”

“But, why would they do something like that?”

“Dunno. I haven’t figured that out yet, but the one holding the key might be you, who transferred on the same day.”

“Y-you’re thinking too much. If it’s the key to these handcuffs, though, I want it.”

“Hmm... No matter how you look at it, it’s suspicious that you don’t remember anything.”

“That’s...”

It was true that her memory between having arrived in Hokkaido and the first day of her transfer were completely blank. Mayo was annoyed that, because of her amnesia, she couldn’t really deny it.

“Why do you care?”

“Like I said yesterday, I’m surprisingly curious.”

Nao smiled like the Cheshire Cat from *Alice in Wonderland*.

At that moment...

“Curiosity Killed The Cat.” (This is said in English.)

A singsong voice. The two were startled by the appearance of a third person at the bottom of the stairs. Especially Nao, who reflexively jumped back after coming face to face with him.

“....Homura Nagi.”

“It’s a saying that means curiosity kills the cat. You should leave it at that. Can’t you see that the transfer student is troubled?”

The boy called Nagi smiled slightly. Even though it was still chilly, he wasn’t wearing anything over his uniform. At first glance, he looked like a big fox.

“Whoops, you were going to PE, not English. But, you were planning on skipping anyway, weren’t you, Nao-chan?”

“Aren’t you doing the same?”

“I have a weak constitution, after all.”

“You smell fishy. I can never tell what you’re thinking.”

“That’s rude. I’m always thinking about something interesting.”

Even with Nao’s dismissive tone, his expression didn’t change. Nagi took his hands out of his pockets and spread them as though he were a performer on stage. After Nao had disappeared from sight, he grinned again.

“Um...”

Mayo tried to find a work of thanks, but Nagi cut her off with a gesture.

“That’s how it always is with her. You don’t have to thank me. See you later, O captive princess.”

“Captive princess?”

“Haha, I just wanted to try saying it.”

Having said it, Nagi ascended the stairs in a carefree manner.



Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy. There were few who knew about the private academy nestled high in the mountains of eastern Hokkaido bordering the Sea of Okhotsk. Even if they had heard the name, in all of Japan there were only a handful of people who knew its true form.

The academy’s students were not normal humans, but teenagers with superhuman abilities who had been gathered from all over Japan. Kagura Mayo was also one of those who had been scouted by Hoshinomiya.

It was May 9th, three days after her transfer. The first-year classes still felt like they were in “warm-up exercises,” but there wasn’t a huge difference from normal highschool classes.

It was something of a letdown for Mayo, who had been expected special training in the use of superpowers. At her orientation on the first day, she had heard that the academy’s purpose was to teach people with superpowers how to live in society without problems.....

However, another face of Fuuka Academy was visible in the after school hours. Mayo had already been plunged into that on her second day.



And on the third day, after school...

Mayo noticed a gathering of people in a corner of the garden. Even though it was after school, there were only a limited number of places to kill time. Because all the students lived in dormitories, no one could just go back home. Nor was there a town to hang out in nearby.

The only saving grace was that a number of recreational facilities had been established within the academy's vast property.

Having heard about this from her knew classmates, Mayo had thought to go and check it out, but...

"Huh, isn't this where I met Shion-chan.....owa!"

Suddenly, Mayo saw a girl being hung upside-down from a tree branch.

That's right. That was where she had met Tennouji Shion yesterday. The group of people was standing right past that spot.

"Hey, it's that unlucky girl."

"If I remember correctly, her name is Mayo-chan or something."

From inside the circle of people came voices calling her name. It was the two she had met the first day in the Student Council office. Second-years Harada Chie and Senou Aoi.

Because she was still restricted by the manacles, the two had called her unlucky.

"Has something happened?"

"Just a little accident."

It certainly had the feel of an accident. There was a black and yellow rope set up around the area. Even the scene of the yakuza invasion hadn't been this imposing.

"Let's see..."

Mayo made her way through gaps in the circle of people.

"Huh? What's that?"

What were there were the many pieces of a stone that had been blasted apart. Mayo, who had been expecting something more frightening, was disappointed.

"A marble relief statue. Or to be more accurate, the fragments of one. Some time yesterday, it was destroyed by someone."

"Relief statue?"

"It's a type of carving, but it's also like a picture. Hold on, I think I have it..."

Chie brought a cell phone out from a pocket.

"Huh, a cell phone?"

"Yeah. I can't make calls because there's no signal, but I can still use the camera. It's also good for keeping time and taking notes. And, though it isn't well-known among the students, the academy has its own satellite antenna and servers, so if I wanted to I could connect to the net."

Chie showed Mayo the photo of the relief statue on her cell phone. It looked sort of like a dragon and a knight out of fantasy. There was also a girl.

"There are people in the picture, so you can get an idea of how big it was. About five meters wide alone. How something like that got smashed to pieces like this.....you listening?"

"Ah, yeah."

Mayo had been looking at the other person in the picture. A white shirt. It looked like he'd been passing by and had been made to go back to have his picture taken. It was none other than the boy she'd just met on the stairs, Homura Nagi.

"The academy is looking for the culprit, it seems. Well, the Student Council is taking care of the investigation."

"Uwa~, that sounds serious."

"Hey hey, that makes it sound like it doesn't involve us."

Aoi responded to Chie's laidback tone.

"Um...why the Student Council?"

"It's student self-government. The Student Council's authority is widely respected. Because of the President's ability, the academy has left many things in her hands."

"President Fujino sometimes asks me and Chie-chan to help out."

"Well, it's not like we can say no to her."

"Haa..."

Yesterday, Mayo had heard from Kuga Natsuki about the Student Council President's war record. Two years ago, the newly admitted Fujino Shizuru had single-handedly subjugated the chaotic academy. She had become Student Council President and had continued in that position ever since. Normally Mayo would have said, "That's ridiculous," but after witnessing the events of two days ago she was easier to convince.

"It's unlikely that the culprits were intruders from the outside, so it was probably someone in the academy. The quick and easy way would be to say that this guy did it."

Chie waved her cell phone.

"It wasn't him."

Realizing that Chie was talking about Homura Nagi, Mayo spoke up.

"Oh? Do you know this Nagi-bou, Kagura Mayo-kun?"

"I just met him today. Anyway, why do you think he did it?"

"To put it simply, it's because he's fishy. You can't tell what he's thinking."

"But he said, 'I'm always thinking about something interesting'."



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～



Higurashi Akane. A second-year who had been in Aoi’s class in first year. Her semilong hair and gentle features were best described by the word ‘trim.’

“But, you know, it can’t be done.”

“Eh? What do you mean?”

“There’s a mechanical system in place around the academy that inhibits telepathy, making it difficult to read minds. I don’t really understand it, but it’s like a shield against electromagnetic brain waves...”

“But, I’ve had my mind read.”

On her trouble-filled first day, Mayo had been brought into the Student Council office, where Kikukawa Yukino had looked into her background.

“The shield isn’t complete. Even though it’s difficult, it’s not completely impossible to read minds. A particularly strong telepath would be able to force it. But, you wouldn’t want that.”

“That’s true...”

“People have places they don’t want others to touch. We’re all the same that way. That’s why there’s no one here who will try to read deep into another’s heart. It’s sort of an unspoken rule. It’s even stronger than the machine system.”

Come to think of it, Mayo remembered that Kikukawa-san had asked the President first. At that time President Fujino had allowed it because it had been an emergency situation.

“There is retribution against those who break the rule. Therefore, even if there are doubts, no one will carelessly enter another’s heart. ....Ah, I’m sorry. I’ve been too forward.”

“No, not at all. Thank you very much.”

At Mayo’s thanks, Akane smiled like the light of the sun in spring.

“I felt like I couldn’t leave you alone, Kagura-san.”

“Why do you know my name?”

“You’re famous, after all.”

Sticking out her little tongue, Akane quickly explained that she hadn’t read her mind.

All Mayo could do was make a pained smile.

Though it was against her will, she knew that she had become famous throughout the academy.

On the other hand, she didn’t know about herself. Even when Kikukawa Yukino had searched, she had only come up with basic information. There had been no buried memories.

What was the scene that had played in the back of her mind two days ago?

And the mysterious explosion. ‘Aren’t you related?’ Mayo was worried about what Yuuki Nao had asked her on the stairs.

“Ho!”

Chie and Aoi looked at each other, then at Mayo. Perfect synchronization. Eyes blazing with curiosity, they were licking their lips.

“W-what is it?”

“Even though you just met him, you seem awfully friendly~”

“A love flag is standing up~”

“Why are you stretching out your words!?”

“The unlucky girl, blinded by her misfortune, met and fell in love with the statue-breaker, Nagi-bou~”

“Pursued by the academy authorities, the two flee. They wander hand in hand through the Hokkaido wilderness. The path of an esper is truly unfortunate.”

“What kind of manga is that? .....That’s right, esper! It’s simple, isn’t it? If you have someone read his mind with telepathy, you’ll know whether Nagi-bou-san is the culprit or not. If you do that, you’ll clear away false suspicions, and then finding the real criminal will only be a matter of time.”

Fuuka Academy was a gathering of people with superhuman abilities from all over the country. Maybe it was not being able to see the forest for the trees, but why hadn’t they realized something this simple? Trying to escape from their questioning, Mayo rambled.

Wait....

The questioning had stopped, but something was strange. Chie and Aoi had troubled expressions. An awkward silence. She felt like all the surrounding eyes were looking in their direction.

“Umm....did I say something wrong?”

“Your suggestion is quite natural.”

“I-isn’t it?”

At the unexpected helpful voice, Mayo turned around. It was a voice like the chirping of a friendly little bird. The owner of the voice did not betray that impression.

“Akane-chan.”

Aoi introduced her.



She wanted to know, yet she didn’t.



The next day – May 10th. Thursday at noon break.

Some students were eating in the two part student cafeteria, while some who could cook were eating in their own dorm rooms.

Fuuka Academy seemed like a normal school on the outside, but the Hoshinomiya organization that managed it was still cloaked in mystery. For example, it’s enormous economic power. Simply the fact that the students were all there free of charge was enough to make you wonder at its scope.

The student dining hall was in the basement and first floor. The first floor portion was further split into an indoor area with stained glass windows and an open terrace.

Because the temperature was still low in eastern Hokkaido, there were few people using the open terrace. Which made it suited for secret conversations.

“Aren’t you cold?”

“Oh, sorry. I was riding my bike. This is nothing.”

Natsuki answered Tennouji Shion, who was carrying their coffee cups.

“Your bike? That suits you, Kuga-san. Since you’ve come all the way to Hokkaido, you want to just drive around, don’t you.”

“I suppose. I’ll want to do that eventually…”

The beautiful long-haired girl got a faraway look in her eyes for a moment, but soon turned back to the conversation.

“What is Mayo doing?”

“The usual. Going back and forth between class and the Student Council office.”

Shion opened a packet of sugar and poured half into her cup. Stirring the coffee, she sighed.

“Even though nothing will happen by doing that.”

“If something goes wrong, the worst that can happen will be her getting taken in by Suzushiro – that strongarm Secretary General. Right now, they’re probably investigating the destruction of the relief statue.”

“Most of the rumors are that it was a first-year called Homura Nagi.”

“Heheh, that’s a good one.”

“What’s that mean?”

“He’s been a prankster since middle school. It serves him right.”

“So that’s how it is. How are things on your end?”

“Takeda and the others are fine. None of them are particularly badly wounded, and they didn’t see the details. They were all unconscious by then, it seems.”

“Really?”

“Believe what I say!”

Having unexpectedly raised her voice, Natsuki purposefully cleared her throat.

Two days ago, Natsuki and the others had fought with the group led by Takeda Masashi. The relief statue had been destroyed during that battle.

Their opponents had been eight men including Takeda himself. Circumstances had favored them….so Shion had thought.

“I’ll believe you. If that’s the case, the only ones who know the true culprit are me and you, Kuga-san.”

“What about Mayo?”

“Kagura-san seems to have no memory of it.”

Yesterday, Shion had also been near the scene of the destruction. She had thought to call out to Mayo, but it had seemed that Mayo herself had no memory of what she had done, so she hadn’t gotten involved.

“No memory, huh… Then we don’t have to worry that she’ll talk about it. But, I can’t tell whether this is good or bad for us. And why has she been going to the Student Council office?”

“That’s…”

Shion explained to Natsuki that Mayo seemed to be worried about Homura Nagi.

“Is that true?”

“I don’t know! I have no idea what Kagura-san’s thinking!”

This time it was Shion who raised her voice, then looked guilty. Herself was one thing, but it was rare for Shion, thought Natsuki.

“That’s gallant of her. But, it would be better if we could frame Nagi, thereby drawing the Student Council’s attention away from her.”

“To falsely accuse an innocent person is a little…”

“Then, do you want to owe Mayo for leaving her hanging?”

“That’s…”

Shion was wavering. While drinking her coffee, Natsuki looked at her troubled face. A lot had happened on Tuesday, but the scene of Shion and Mayo kissing was still vivid in her memory.

“So you are childhood friends.”

“We aren’t. ....Well, I think we aren’t.”

“You think?”

“My childhood memories are vague. I know I used to play with someone, but whether or not that was Mayo….Kagura-san… I certainly can’t state with confidence like hers.”

“Your memories too, huh.”

Natsuki thought it was unnatural. Or perhaps those blank spots were keys, or possible leads.

“Ah well. I thought it was just going to be the start of a new round of academy battles, and didn’t mean to stick our heads into something troublesome.”

“I have a suggestion.”

“What’s this, all of a sudden?”

“If you want to achieve results against the Student Council, rather than Kagura-san, we should thrust you in there.”

“W-what!? This isn’t the time for jokes!”

“I’m always serious.”

Shion pushed her glasses up with a finger.

“To be exact, it won’t affect the Student Council so much as the President herself. Well, in this case it’s the same thing.”

“W-what are you basing this on…”

“It wasn’t that difficult to gather information, and despite how I look, I’m pretty good at judging people. Don’t worry. If anything happens to you, I’ll take over the faction.”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

At present, Fuuka Academy’s Kuga Faction had only three members. And one of them, Kagura Mayo, hadn’t even realized it yet.



“What’s wrong, President?”

Kikukawa Yukino looked over from where she was writing on the whiteboard.

“Nothing is wrong, Kikukawa-san. I just felt like I was about to sneeze. Please continue.”

“Yes.”

Thinking that the President’s voice was too coy to have been close to sneezing, Yukino continued to write out the topics.

- Explosion (Monday)
- Invasion (Monday)
- Relief Statue Destroyed (Tuesday ~ Wednesday)
- Revival of the Academy Conflicts?

“Yukino, aren’t there too many topics? You should be more concise.”

“But, Haruka-chan…”

“Principal Kanzaki has only asked us to look into the relief statue matter.”

Suzushiro Haruka raised herself from her chair and looked around the room in a challenging manner.

“Isn’t that right, Reito-san?”

“Well, I suppose.”

Although Haruka’s state would make most people flinch, Reito, who was sitting across the room, accepted it calmly.

“Including the large relief statue that was destroyed this time, more than half of the campus’s sculptures and paintings are to my brother’s taste. He’s probably taking it personally… I don’t really mind, though. The Student Council can do as it pleases.”

“Thank you.”

The person Shizuru thanked was named Kanzaki Reito. He was the Principal, Kanzaki Rei’s, younger brother by a wide margin and a third-year high school student.

Acting as the Principal’s representative, or perhaps as an observer, he occasionally showed up in the Student Council room. Unlike his hard-faced older brother, he had elegant features. He had a gentle manner and was popular among the female students.

Shizuru spoke up.

“Although what Suzushiro-san is saying is certainly natural, I feel that the many incidents that have taken place over the last few days are somehow connected.”

“Connected? But I heard that the yakuza on Monday had come because of a personal grudge against the President. It seems pretty certain.”

“Now now, Haruka-san. Shizuru-san took care of that mostly by herself. Fortunately, there were no casualties among the students.”

“Reito-san, you’re always too lenient with President Fujino.”

“That’s not what I…”

“What I’m interested in is why they picked that day. Such a flashy incident could very well have something hidden behind it, I think.” Shizuru said.

“Such as?”

“I haven’t figured that out yet.”

Shizuru said the same thing that Yuuki Nao had said the day before. The talented woman who ruled the Academy’s center and the girl who was like a stray cat following her curiosity. To think that these opposites would think alike…

“Even so, those yakuza-san have already been ‘taken care of’, so these are all the leads we have.”

Saying this, Shizuru looked down at the pictures covering her desk. The destroyed relief statue. Harada Chie, who had taken the picture, explained it again.

“A marble statue more than two meters in height and about five meters wide. To break it down piece by piece would take a whole night, and you’d probably be discovered. I thought that it might have been destroyed in a brief period, but we couldn’t find any trace of explosives.”

“And if it were an explosion, it would have made a loud noise, no?”

“Yes, and no one heard anything like that,” said Aoi, who was with Chie.

“In that case, it must have been done with psychokinetic power.”

“ ‘Revival of the Academy Conflicts?’, is it? ”

Reito read off the last thing Yukino had written on the whiteboard.

“Unfortunately, it seems that we should take the question mark off.”

Although there had been nothing as showy as the statue’s destruction, there had already been reports of several consecutive incidents where students had battled with superpowers.

“The Academy would like the flames put out before they get too big.”

“That also falls under our self-government, doesn’t it?”

“Yes, Haruka-san.”

“Don’t worry. If we get the main person, things will settle down on their own. There are only a few psychokinetics with the power to destroy something this big.”

“You should be able to handle it, Suzushiro-san.”

“O-of course. It’ll be a piece of *tsuchi no ko* (a mythological Japanese creature).”

“That’s ‘a piece of cake’ (*ocha no ko*), Haruka-chan.”

It was Haruka and Yukino’s natural comedy performance. Was it because *tsuchi no ko* were said to be healthy when you ate them over rice and tea, or had it been around before that? In any case, everyone ignored it.

“Other than Suzushiro-san, there are only a few students who have that much psychokinetic power. Other than that, I can only think of the Suzaku Association.”

“But didn’t you break up the Suzaku Association, President?”

“That brings back memories.”

Shizuru gazed out the window.

People with superhuman abilities from all over the country were gathered at Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy. It was only natural that those youths would want to show off their powers that normal people did not have. Indeed, these people who bragged about being outsiders from normal human society did not take kindly to being managed. As a result, conflicts broke out between the many groups, and the Academy descended into chaos. It had reached its peak two years before. And it had been silenced in the spring of that same year. All had been the work of the new student, Fujino Shizuru.

The Suzaku Association had been the largest faction, and Shizuru’s strongest and final enemy.

“It’s true that ‘that attack’ of theirs was a problem. But the leaders of the group have already ‘graduated’, and the lower-class students have scattered and should be behaving themselves. Is there something you’re worried about?”

“No, there’s nothing certain.”



Shizuru looked away from the window. The Suzaku Association had definitely vanished. However, not even Shizuru knew for certain who had really been its leader.

“Well, I don’t think that the remnants could amount to much, but we should probably be on our guard. We should also make arrangements against the other groups.”

“Ahh!”

Interrupting Reito, Haruka let out a shout and leapt to her feet.

“I forgot something important. Let me borrow that, Yukino.”

Going to the front, Haruka took the water-based pen from Yukino.

“An important suspect.”

“A suspect? But that first-year Homura Nagi is just a rumor, and there’s no proof.”

“Heh. Do you think that I would be fooled by that fake information? This one’s not just a suspect. They’re at the center of all these incidents.”

The pen ran over the whiteboard. Haruka, who had said that the topics should be more concise, added yet another.

- The Handcuff Wolf (手錠狼)

“.....”

“What are you all being silent for? Was it that unexpected? How about it, Yukino?”

“.....It’s not ‘wolf’ (狼), it’s ‘girl’ (娘), Haruka-chan.”



Twilight came quickly in the mountains. The evening sun had sunk behind the mountain ridge, and the Academy was illuminated only by the moon and the outside lighting.

From darkness to darkness. As though trying to dodge the lights, a figure was moving. That figure stopped in a corner of the rear garden. The corner was roped off. It was where the statue had been destroyed.

After briefly examining the area, the figure crouched to slip under the rope. At that moment...



“Please wait!”

Going after the figure, Mayo grabbed it from behind. Because her wrists were handcuffed as usual, the circle of her arms enclosed it completely from the head down.

“Whoawhoawhoa....wah!”

The short, crouching figure couldn’t support Mayo’s weight and collapsed to the ground.

“Ouch....”

“S-sorry, Homura Nagi-bou-san.”

“No, my name isn’t Nagi-bou, it’s just Nagi. ....Um, Mayo-chan, right? You have some impressive breasts. Not just their size, but also their perfect softness and elasticity – guwah!”

Realizing that she was glued to Nagi’s back, Mayo tried to let go and stand up. At that moment, the handcuff chains bit hard into Nagi’s neck.

Mayo let go in a hurry, but for a while Nagi was crawling around gasping for breath.

“....I-I seriously thought I was going to die. What are you doing here?”

“The perpetrator always returns to the scene of the crime. It looks like that proverb is true.”

“No, that isn’t a proverb, it’s a line from a cop drama or something.....Hold on a minute. You’re saying I’m the criminal!? That I broke the statue!?”

“That what everyone’s saying. Please turn yourself in before the Student Council catches you. If you do, you should be able to get off light.”

“Well, I’m happy for the warning. But, I don’t think Shizuru-san is that foolish.”

“And so?”

“Well, isn’t the Student Council looking at you as a suspect as well?”

“Me!? I don’t remember doing anything like that!”

“That seems like a problem.”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“That’s right!”

“What is it this time?”

“Let’s run away together, Nagi-bou – no, Nagi-san!”

“Why does it have to be like that? ……Well, you’re definitely interesting.”

Rubbing his throat where it was red from the chain, Nagi grinned. On his face was that familiar disdainful smile.

“I’m serious, you know.”

“Even if you say run away, it’s not that simple…… That’s right, this rope. I wonder why they made it a restricted area.”

“Well, it’s to keep bystanders away from the scene.”

“There’s that. But I’m also thinking this. Couldn’t it be that the reason they don’t want people getting close is in order to conceal the truth?”

“Conceal the truth?”

Narrowing her eyes, Mayo looked at the scene again. The shattered fragments of marble were lying all around. It was the same as she’d seen around noon……Noon. She felt like she’d seen it before that. The relief statue before it had been broken. It had had a picture of a dragon carved into it. *I fought someone here.*

“Someone’s coming.”

There was definitely a presence approaching from the darkness. Feeling thoroughly guilty, Mayo followed Nagi’s beckoning and hid in the shadow of a tree.

It was quiet. It was so quiet that she could clearly hear the flutter of moths drawn by the lights. Nagi whispered into that silence.

“Did you know? This place is still illuminated by the windows and outside lighting, but if you take one step off the campus grounds, you’ll be heading into the true darkness. It’s so dark that you wouldn’t know if someone grabbed your nose. Darkness that people from cities can’t even imagine stretches for more than ten kilometers. Despite this, do you still want to run away?”

“…I…”

“Because of all the things that have happened over the past few days, you want to run away. That’s what it is, right? But you know, if you leave here, you’ll be in darkness. Even if you make it down the mountain and to a town, it’s still in the darkness. Even inside people’s hearts, you know. You came here because you didn’t like that, right?”

“……”

The girl who had come alone stopped in front of the rope.

“You know your friend? ……Tennouji Shion. Her ability is….psychometry. That’s not good. Whoops!”

Mayo had tossed Nagi’s arm off of her shoulder. Contact telepathy that could read thoughts through touching. Her surface thoughts had been read. It was against the rule that Higurashi Akane had spoken of.

“Ow…so what’s the limit of her power?”

“If you get involved with Shion-chan, she’ll see through everything. All your evil deeds, too.”

“That would be awfully inconvenient.”

Frowning, Nagi put his thumb to his lips.

Psychometry, which could read information from not just humans, but from all manner of things. Even though he hadn’t destroyed the statue, Nagi had an grim expression now that he knew Shion’s power.

“Nagi-bou-san, what are you plotting?”

“Like I said, I’m not Nagi-bou. Plotting, huh? Something interesting, of course. But it’s a little too early to have my secrets exposed. At least, there are people who think so.”

“Eh?”

“Mayo-chan, you want to help your friend, don’t you? At this rate, she’ll be in danger.”

At the moment she felt something approaching at high speed, Mayo was pushed by Nagi and sent flying out from behind the tree.



“……Kagura-san? What are you doing here?”

Looking at Mayo, who had emerged from the shadow of a tree, Tennouji Shion sounded surprised. However, that was just the prelude to the frightening evening performance.

“Shion-chan, behind you!”

When she turned around in response to that voice, Shion’s eyes went wide.

Countless stones were floating in the air. They were the fragments that had been behind the restricted line. Those pieces, which had formed a relief statue the day before, leapt away from Shion’s questing hand and seemed as though they were bearing fangs at her.

“Ah!”

A flying stone fragment struck near Shion’s legs. Two, three. Soon Shion’s legs got tangled and she fell over.

More fragments attacked like thrown stones, but they struck an invisible wall.

“Shion-chan! ……Eh!”

Mayo, who had jumped in, gasped. It was good that she was protecting Shion from attacks using her psychokinesis, but the fragments that had struck were floating again and were now aiming for Mayo.

“Uh!!”

Mayo took the fast and heavy concentrated attack with her body. Slammed back up against a spruce tree, she let out a cry of anguish and collapsed on her ass.

“Kagura-san!?”  
Shion couldn’t believe her eyes. For Mayo, who had that much power, to lose so easily…

Perhaps convinced of their victory, the attackers approached. Although their faces were hidden in the darkness, there seemed to be two boys and one girl. And there was one more boy, who appeared calmly with a faint smile on his lips.

“Homura Nagi! You’re with them too?”

“Not quite. Um, Shion-chan, right? These three are members of the Suzaku Association. I’m just a freelancer, but we have what you would call a ‘give and take’ relationship.”



“Which means?”

“You and Mayo-chan fought with Takeda’s group here the other day, didn’t you? The Principal’s favorite relief statue was destroyed there at that time. Oh, but I don’t have any interest in searching for the culprit. Although it’s a pain being suspected myself.”

“Then why are you here?”

“I wonder. But I was surprised. Mayo suddenly showed up and suggested that we elope together.

“!”

“She’s a strange girl. When her bouncing bust was pressing on me, I felt my heart racing.”

“.....You’re lying.”

“Eh?”

“Mayo wouldn’t do anything like that. Not with someone like you.”

“W-well, I exaggerated a little, but I wouldn’t call it lying...”

Nagi recoiled from Shion’s threatening posture. Although Shion herself hadn’t realized it, her way of addressing Mayo had changed.

“ ‘Someone like you,’ you say, but what do you know about me having only just met.....”

Remembering that Mayo had said Shion would see through everything, Nagi stepped back without thinking. A first-rate psychometry user would be a problem. Understanding that the current psychological warfare situation was bad, the boy changed the flow.

“Well, Mayo-chan isn’t a bad girl, but to be honest she isn’t my type, so I passed on the eloping. Are you relieved?”

“Nagi!”

“You should consider our relative positions, Shion-chan. Your opponent right now is the Suzaku Association. It’s not really an official tournament, but you could say that defeating Takeda has moved you up to Round Two of the Academy Battles. However, the Suzaku Association is a seeded championship candidate, so they’re probably too much for a puny group like yours.”

“We still have Kuga-san.”

“Natsuki-chan is great, isn’t she. But the Suzaku Association still has lots of guys sitting on the bench who even I don’t know about. I feel bad about saying it, but these three here are just low rankers. Even so, they’re strong, aren’t they?

“!”

“One on one, Mayo-chan probably can’t be surpassed, but three together can win. It’s the Suzaku Association’s specialty: team psychokinesis. The power is not added, but multiplied. Neither you nor Natsuki-chan have any hope of victory, you know.”

“....I see.”

Nagi was startled by a sudden voice from the side. The three who had been sure of victory and even Shion couldn’t find the voice’s owner. It sounded that much like a *different person*.

*It can’t be, again?*

Looking over at the spruce tree, she saw Mayo getting up while leaning against it.

Nagi and the others also noticed this.

“Well well, you sure try hard. My opinion of you has improved. But it would have been more clever to attack while faking your death, I think.”

“That kind of trick would be like you.”

“ ‘Like you’? Everyone’s talking like they know me. I don’t really like it. You can finish her.”

At that point...

Nagi, who was already thinking about how to clean up afterward, was suddenly struck dumb. The flying chunks of marble that should have finished Mayo off suddenly exploded into grains of sand right before reaching her. As though smashed in an invisible vice, all the fragments were destroyed like that.

“Power that becomes stronger with more people, huh? In that case, next time don’t bring three people. Bring a hundred.”

“What!?”

It was a completely fearless statement. What surprised Nagi and the others even more was Kagura Mayo’s transformation.

Although it was hard to see in the poor outside lighting, it seemed as though something were crawling over Mayo’s face. Like a red snake, or a lizard. In the next instant, it seemed that her whole face was covered in a striped pattern, but then that disappeared as well.

“Mayo-cha....no, who are you?”

Without answering, Mayo casually flipped her hair off of her face. Raising one side of her mouth, she smirked, and there was a disturbing light in her eyes.

“Wah!”

There was a shock. As the ground began shaking as though there were an earthquake, Nagi and the others were forced to jump around clumsily. Lawn and dirt flew everywhere. From the ground erupted what seemed to be a monster’s writhing tentacles.

“These are tree roots? She can’t have ripped them out with psychokinesis.....this is a lie, right?”

It was neither a lie nor an illusion. As Mayo laughed, the spruce tree was torn out of the ground with a sound like a scream.

The spruce became as a giant’s arm and swept across the nighttime garden. The air roared, countless leaves scattered. Even though she was out of the strike zone, Shion couldn’t remain standing and clung to the ground.

Realizing it had finally stopped, her eyes opened. Her vision was blurred. Groping for her glasses, she somehow stood up.

It had been settled in an instant. Only Mayo was standing in what looked to be the remains of a whirlwind. The Suzaku Association people had been literally swept away.

Actually, as Shion started to call out to Mayo, a head popped up from underneath the scattered leaves. It was a spruce-leaf covered Homura Nagi.

Nagi tried to speak, but he kept coughing and couldn’t get it out. After finally spitting out the thin leaves, he started talking like a machine gun. Of all things, he was praising Mayo. Although one would normally think he was begging for his life with compliments, he seemed unusually serious.

“...I take my hat off to you! Truly mysterious! How foolish I was. To think that I hadn’t realized your true form. You are a woman who has completely surpassed my imagination. Mayo-chan – no, Mayo-sama! I’ll follow you anywhere. Let us leave this enclosed academy for a world of freedom!”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～



“I’m not going anywhere.”

“Eh?”

“I’ve decided to stay here a little longer. It seems there are still things left to destroy.”

“No way…”

Beneath the shining moon, Mayo grinned at Nagi, who was begging like a puppy. And…

“Get lost, insect.”



“…Understood. Then make arrangements for the cleanup. It’s within the budget.”

Kanzaki Rei put down the phone.

“What has happened? That loud noise just now?”

“It seems there was another battle tonight. Rather than calling people from the outside, I thought it would be more efficient to use our new landscaping and building maintenance staff. To protect our secrets as well.”

“I suppose.”

Himeno Fumi raised a hand to her mouth, but she didn’t really seem all that surprised. She continued in her usual relaxed tone.

“We should hurry, shouldn’t we? At this rate, even the school buildings will be damaged.”

“It’s faster than nothing happening, isn’t it? This time it’s the real thing. It means that our long wait has been worth it. However, looking at what’s happened up to now, it seems that we should make a few orbital adjustments.”

Kanzaki stood and walked over to the paintings that were hanging on the wall of the Principal’s office. The paintings were modeled on myth and legend, matching what his younger brother Reito had said about his tastes. He stopped in front of one of them. There were the likenesses of a knight fighting with a dragon, and a girl who seemed out-of-place. It was the same as the relief statue that had been destroyed in the garden the other day and that had just been reduced to even smaller pieces.

To Kanzaki, the person who had destroyed the statue wasn’t the problem. It was just that it would be troublesome if psychometry discovered the motive behind placing the statue there. Therefore, the complete destruction of the statue was lucky.

“What is that painting, exactly?”

“ It’s called ‘The Mordiford Wyvern’. Its a legend from medieval Europe.”

“Wyvern?”

“Part of the dragon family. A girl named Maud finds an abandoned wyvern baby and raises it. After maturing, the wyvern is attached to Maud, but it attacks and eats the other villagers. In the end, a knight slays the wyvern, but he is astonished by the sobbing Maud. Among the many European dragon legends, this is about the only one where a girl becomes emotionally attached to a dragon. However, it seems that ‘our dragon’ didn’t take a liking to it.”

“I wonder what our dragon didn’t like about it. Why don’t you ask directly?”

“Surely you jest, Chairwoman.”

Kanzaki turned around and glanced at the smiling Fumi.

“I don’t want to be eaten just yet.”

**To be continued...**

(For more on The Mordiford Wyvern, go to [http://www.dragnix.net/Legends/maud\\_wyvern.html](http://www.dragnix.net/Legends/maud_wyvern.html))



# 舞・HIME DESTINY 龍の巫女

てんのうし  
天王寺しおん

なんか中二……小遣金も尽きてるんだ！  
でもスタイルイイので許す

くさくさ  
菊川雪之

いつでもどこでも電脳ライフ。  
PC絡とさないでね。感電するから……

あじのしずる  
藤乃静留

おそろし幸福なことでしょう。  
今日は静留にとって至福の一日に。  
で、手に持ってるの……鉄扇？

relax?

case3

手錠娘は脱いでもスゴいんです！の場合

超規格外の特長能力を持つ若者が集う学び舎「星之宮風華学園」。「どこかで静留、海水浴って響きはよくないか」「ふふふ、なつきの水着姿、楽しみやねえ」ってことで気軽に海へGo!……っでわけにはいかんのです。だってこのガッコは北海道にあるうえ、一番近い海はオホーツク海。へたすりゃセイウチに襲われる。そんなこんなで、娘さんたちはレクリエーション施設のプールにダイブ!! しかし……プールにはトドやセイウチも逃げ出す、まさに超規格外のバカモノがいた。それが……真夜のバストである。バスト90ですよ!! 更に手錠があるから「上げて寄せて〜」状態だよ!! だから最大体感バストは100くらいかな!! (なんじゃそりゃ) そりゃみんな意識するよね……。

舞 HIME ★ DESTINY 龍の巫女

原作 矢立肇 著者 伊吹秀明

イラスト 目黒三吉

あじのしずる  
珠洲城連

たゆんたゆんなバストの連ちゃん様。  
実は彼女の胸も真夜に次ぐ大きさなのだよ

Dive in  
Blue  
夏色の少女たち

が  
玖我なつき

わぁい、スク水だぁー。彼女も別の  
バストが気になって世間体ない様子

かぐら  
神楽真夜

胸もスゴいがスタイルも抜群!  
ところで、どーやって泳ぐ? (笑)

ゆうき  
結城奈緒

水着の上からカットジーンズ!  
タイトさが強調されて◎であります!



CHAPTER 4:  
ON THE EVE OF  
REVOLUTION

TRANSLATION BY  
MAKOTO

# 舞・HIME DESTINY

## 龍の巫女

### 第四話「革命前夜祭」<sup>かくめい</sup>

“チカラ”を持った学生による勢力抗争。  
「若いから力を持て余しているんだろう、いいじゃない」  
ってわけにはいかない。

ここは星之宮風華学園なのだから。  
強大な超能力を有する高校生の檻なのだから。

今回の抗争劇の影には……二年前の抗争時、最大派閥で  
あった「朱雀会」の影が見え隠れしていた……。



原作

**矢立 肇**

企画

**サンライズ**

キャラクターデザイン

**久行宏和**

著者

**伊吹秀明**

イラスト

**目黒三吉**

©SUNRISE



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“.....uun”

Suzushiro Haruka’s consciousness was in darkness. It was as though she were floating in a deep, dark ocean.

At length, a single ray of light pierced the darkness, and at the same time she heard a voice calling her name.

“...chan, Haruka-chan.”

A voice as soft as a feather. Familiar and soothing. That voice and light reached Haruka. Although it was small at first, it grew, and Haruka opened her eyes. She broke the surface of the water.

“....ha.”

What she saw was a white ceiling and the face of a worried-looking glasses girl – Kikukawa Yukino.

“Haruka-chan! You finally woke up.”

“Yukino, where am I?”

“Ah, you mustn’t get up yet.”

“Ugh.”

A sharp pain. Haruka held the sliding ice pack to her forehead and lay down again. That ceiling and bed, those white curtains. Haruka realized that she had been sleeping in the infirmary.

“...I was having a long dream.”

“A dream?”

“I was in an open-air hot spring with a bridge somewhere in Japan, when someone knocked me down while I was bare naked. Next I was in a large building, wearing a strange yellow-green outfit and doing some sort of government work, but the people around me were always knocking me out with things like weight stones and hammers. You were one of them.”

“That’s terrible, Haruka-chan. I wouldn’t do anything like that.”

“I know.”

Although the contents had been unusual, it had just been a dream, after all. And one other thing she understood was that the ‘first attack’ that had sent her to dreamland had been real. Because of that, she had ended up on a bed in the infirmary.

Who had attacked her? Haruka hadn’t seen the person’s face.

“I can’t just stay here.”

Ignoring Yukino’s protests, Haruka raised herself from the bed. It still hurt a little, but it was much better than before.

“Just what happened?”

The doctor’s work desk was by the window. Haruka saw a hand mirror on it.

“Youko-sensei examined you and said that you would be fine. We’re preparing for tomorrow – ah, don’t do that!”

Haruka quickly reached for the mirror. Yukino tried to grab it too, but Haruka was faster.

Haruka looked at where she had been hit. She could see why Yukino had tried to stop her.

On her spacious forehead, between her neatly-cut bangs and slightly large eyebrows, an insulting word was written.

“Um, it seems to be oil-based, so it wouldn’t come off easily...”

“Hm. ‘diputS’, it says. My cowardly enemy can’t even write properly, it seems. Do they think I’ll be damaged by something like this?”

“That’s because it’s a mirror, Haruka-chan...”

“What!?”

With a shout, Haruka leapt out of bed. She fixed the hem of her skirt, tightened her tie, grabbed her vest from a hanger, and strode out of the infirmary. So vigorous were her strides that Yukino couldn’t keep up without jogging.

“Wait, Haruka-chan!”

“We have to hurry, Yukino. While we’re idle like this, work is piling up!”

Student Council staffers Haruka and Yukino. Of course, the work Haruka was talking about also including finding her attacker. She was suddenly filled with fighting spirit.

At present, Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy was busy with preparations for three school events.

First was the high school’s physical exam and health checkup, which was beginning the next day. Those preparations were conducted entirely by the faculty, so the Student Council didn’t have a role in it.

Second was next month’s cultural festival. The Student Council was busy regulating the fierce budget competition between the various groups.

The third event wasn’t part of the Council’s normal job. In fact, it wasn’t something that could be done publicly. It was the conflict between the various student groups. Being Fuuka Academy students, this conflict naturally took the form of superpower battles. Although things had been quiet for some time, that spring there had been a sign that the battle was starting again after two years. For the student council, controlling the conflict was urgent business.

At present, the Student Council room on the second floor of the main building was jammed with regular Council members, temporary members, and students going in and out. A Budget Committee meeting, petitions, inquiries, a report of a battle taking place behind the second gym.... The bustling scene was like that of a battlefield command post.

Suzushiro Haruka’s comeback had the feel of an injured soldier’s return.

At the sound of the door opening and the appearance of the Secretary General, all the commotion suddenly stopped.

“Suzushiro-san, you don’t have to come back in such a state.”

Fujino Shizuru spoke worriedly from where she was looking over documents at her desk. Around Haruka’s head was wrapped a white cloth, after all.

“No need to worry about me. This isn’t a bandage, but a headband.”

Oooh - the gathered students stirred in amazement. Some even applauded. What fighting spirit. Everyone knew that Haruka had been attacked by someone. Of course, the white cloth was to hide the writing on her forehead.

“President, of course you’ll leave this matter to me, won’t you?”

“I suppose...”

“Going after me is the same as going after the Student Council. We can’t let the Suzaku Association have their way any more!”

Shizuru didn’t offer a rebuttal to Haruka, who had concluded that her attacker had been with the Suzaku Association.



It seemed that with the revival of the Academy Battle, the largest faction from the conflict two years ago had also been resurrected. Their movements were swift, and it appeared that they were involved in the greater part of the battles that had taken place over the last several days.

“Well then, Suzushiro-san, what exactly do you plan to do?”

“Of course, I’ll drag out their head and stomp on them…”

“Do you know where that head is?”

“Head?”

In the next moment, the blank-looking Haruka clutched her head as the pain returned.

“Uu~”

“Now see, you mustn’t push yourself.”

The problem was that the Suzaku Association’s leader hadn’t been found yet. They had many people, but the upper-level members were wary and weren’t showing their tails. The only leads were the members who had been affiliated two years ago, and Shizuru meant to start searching from there.

“It’s a nuisance, but being straightforward is probably the best way. If they know that they’re being cornered, they might come out by themse-“

What stopped Shizuru mid-sentence was the door opening again. Because many students were coming and going, that in itself wasn’t worth mentioning, but the way the packed students parted to the left and right was surprising. It was like that scene in the movie “The Ten Commandments” where Moses parts the Red Sea.

Down that path walked a student with blue-green medium-length hair. She must have felt the charged atmosphere of the Student Council room, but her expression and pace didn’t show it.

“You’re high school second year, Hinagiku Tomoe-san.”

“Well. To think that that beautiful Student Council President, admired by the entire student body, would know my name. I’m honored.”

“It’s nothing that special.”

Shizuru flicked the document she had just been reading with a finger. It was a list of the Suzaku Association’s members from two years ago. On it appeared the name of Hinagiku Tomoe, who had been a middle-schooler at the time. Although the Association had been disbanded and she couldn’t be labeled as a member offhand, it couldn’t be ignored.

“Well, what is your business?”

“Nothing special. I just came to deliver some documents.”

Tomoe removed a sheaf of papers affixed with a double clip from her bag and placed it on the desk. Without a moment’s delay, Haruka took them.

“Budget applications for the cultural festival? Go Club, Art Club, Chorus Club, Literature Club, Horticulture Club, Astronomy Club, Photography Club, and Anime Club! Why so many?”

At Fuuka Academy there were many students who were part of two or three clubs. Being an all-dorm school in the mountains, students had an abundance of free time after school. Even so, this seemed like too much to Haruka.

“I was sent by the Culture Club Leaders’ Committee. Knowing how busy you are, they thought that integrating all the applications would make it easier to handle.”

“Integrating, you say? You can’t possibly think that you can push all these through at once!”

“That’s terrible, Secretary General. There’s no way I could do something so outrageous…”

Tomoe raised a hand to her eyes and posed like she was going to faint. It wasn’t an act, it was really just a pose.

“If you doubt it, please look over it carefully. Each club representative has properly signed off on it.”

“They weren’t forced to sign it? ...Eh!?”

As she made a large sweep of her hand, the sheaf of papers flew apart with a rustle. White papers danced through the air. At the same time, for some reason, Haruka’s headband fell off, revealing the characters on her forehead. She quickly tried to cover them with a hand, but it was too late. Many people had already seen the word “Stupid” written there.

In an instant Haruka’s face became as red as a boiled octopus and her mouth moved like a goldfish gasping for air. In the infirmary she had been strong in front of Yukino, but this damage was certainly large.

“We’ll take care of these for now.”

As though indifferent to the commotion, Shizuru spoke calmly. The scattered papers floated into the air before piling themselves in order on her desk. Both Fujino Shizuru’s daily life and swordsmanship were always dignified, and it seemed that her telekinesis was the same.

“I knew the famous Student Council President would understand. Well then, I’ll be going.”

Tomoe made an about face and headed for the door. She looked back only once, and said, “This academy is like a prison, after all. We should at least be able to have a spectacular time during the cultural festival. Don’t you agree, everyone?”

No sooner than Tomoe had left, Yukino quietly stood from her seat.

“President Fujino.”

“Yes, what is it, Kikukawa-san?”

“May I take care of those documents?”

“Of course. Finances are your territory, so I’ll leave them to you.”

Yukino took the documents that Tomoe had left and looked over them.

“Aside from the club representatives, Hinagiku-san has also signed it. With all these, we should be able to match the handwriting with the characters on Haruka-cha-, I mean Suzushiro-san’s forehead.”

“As to be expected of Kikukawa-san. That we might be able to move forcefully soon, I’m counting on you. When that happens, it will again be time for you two to act.”

Although Fuuka Academy was filled with people with superhuman abilities, there were certain restrictions on the use of those powers. Although Kikukawa Yukino was a first-rate telepath, there was a rule against the reckless reading of a person’s deep thoughts. But with proper cause, forced reading was possible.



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“It’s good to have friends, Suzushiro-san. Not getting rid of that writing was prudent.”

“Huh?”

Shizuru spoke to the still-dazed Haruka. Then, to no one in particular, she muttered, “Hinagiku Tomoe. If she has inherited the Suzaku Association, she’s quite bold to enter the enemy’s camp by herself…”



“Double side ponytails.”

“What’s this all of a sudden?”

Feeling something unusual in Shion’s gaze, Kagura Mayo responded.

“That hairstyle. Having your hair tied in two tails like that is generally called twintails, but in the fashion world it’s called double side ponytails. It suits you with your loli face. But then there’s your breasts, which are inversely proportional to your face. F...no, G, I think.”

“Wh-what are you talking about?”

Mayo instinctively tried to cover her breasts. As Shion had discerned, those two bulges were held by an underbust-65cm G-cup bra. The only other thing she was wearing was white panties. Well, there was one other thing she was wearing besides underwear.

“That’s it, those handcuffs!”

“Huh?”

“I was thinking that you look too erotic for it to be just because you’re only wearing underwear. It’s because of those. I thought I’d gotten used to Kagura-san’s handcuffs, but looking at you like this shows that there’s still some novelty.”

“Wh-what are you saying!?”

“Oh, sorry, it just slipped out. But if Harada-senpai were here, she’d definitely be taking pictures.”

Although Shion was wearing a blouse, she, too, was only wearing underwear below the waist.

Today was the high school first year body measurement day. It was a busy day with not just height, weight, and chest measurements, but also medical checkups.

As expected of a school filled with people using superpowers, those abilities were also examined. Students with telekinetic powers had them measured, and students with ESP had those abilities classified and examined.

The examination staff was used to it. From the examination area came the sound of a student screaming, “My eyes, my eyes!” It appeared that a male student with X-ray vision had tried to peek, and the girls had counterattacked him. This was a customary event that took place every year, and Youko-sensei had a cool expression that seemed to say, “Don’t worry about it.”

The woman called Sagisawa Youko, who the students thought was a normal school doctor, was actually also a professor of clinical super-psychology, and was responsible for giving expert directions to the examination staff.

The students had first been separated into groups of seven or eight, then separated further based on specific test data, until finally Mayo and Shion had been placed together alone.

Not able to leave the handcuffed Mayo alone in the large changing room, Shion was helping her get dressed.

“Even if panties and a skirt are fine…”

While helping Mayo put on her miniskirt with top-stitched pleats, Shion looked up at her.

“The problem is how you get your arms through your sleeves. How do you do it?”

Speaking of which, it was a mystery how she’d managed to get undressed.

“There’s a little trick to it.”

“A trick?”

Mayo’s blouse shirt floated up out of the changing bin and approached her from the rear. Shion understood that it was being done with telekinesis, but she didn’t see how Mayo could get both arms through the sleeves while handcuffed.

In the next instant, Mayo’s arms were in both sleeves.

“Eh? What just happened?”

It was like one of those logic puzzles, only with clothes. How had she gotten her arms through the sleeves? Shion drew closer to Mayo.

“W-wait. It’s nothing special. I just teleport the clothes on.”

“Teleport?”

Shion replayed the last few seconds in her head. The blouse had been approaching Mayo’s body. In the next instant, the clothes had *jumped* past the handcuffs and appeared on the body. It wasn’t impossible.

But wasn’t that a high level technique? The ability to move people and objects with the power of the mind, teleportation, was normally evaluated by maximum range and mass, but accuracy was also an important factor. It doesn’t matter if you have a pitcher who can throw 160kph fastballs if he can’t throw strikes.

“You’re pretty skillful too, aren’t you? I thought that all you had going for you was ridiculously powerful telekinesis.”

“I learned to do it after I got here. I’ve tried to do a lot of things with these handcuffs restricting me.....ridiculously powerful? What did I do, when!?”

“Hey, hold still!” Shion admonished while trying to button Mayo’s blouse.

“Why do you look so happy?”

“Ehehe, you used to dress me like this when we were little, Shion-chan.”

“Me? I don’t remember.”

“You did! You always told me to hold still.”

“You probably hear that a lot.”

*What a strange girl, Shion thought. To kiss me right after we meet..... And she doesn’t remember the fight we had the other day with the Suzaku Association or whatever. This girl right in front of me and the her from back then are like completely different people.....hm?*

Suddenly looking surprised, Shion began to violently undo the buttons she’d just fastened.

“Wh-what!?”



“As I thought.”

“Like I said, what?”

“This.”

“Hyal!”

Spreading the blouse’s collar, Shion exposed Mayo’s chest. Because the bra was a  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup, Mayo’s white peach-like skin and her deep cleavage were easy to see. Shion was pointing at a design arranged in three lines. It was about two or three centimeters in size.

“That’s a tattoo I haven’t seen before.”

“I don’t have anything frightening like that.”

“Well, there are temporary things you can put on with a sticker. If not that, is it a birthmark?”

“That’s right, it’s just a birthmark. The shape is a little unusual, but what difference does it make?”

“If it’s just a birthmark, there are two points of interest. Just now, the mark wasn’t here, but over here.”

Shion poked Mayo below her left breast.

“Did it just move on its own to cross your deep cleavage, or did it teleport like your clothes?”

“That’s impossible. You must be seeing things.”

“Hmm. Unfortunately, it’s true that I don’t have confidence in my eyesight,” Shion said while wiping her glasses on the collar of her shirt. Even with corrective lenses, her vision was still below average. And what about her memory? It wasn’t just Mayo. Shion also had vague areas in her memory.

“So what’s the other thing?”

The second point of interest was that Mayo’s birthmark looked familiar. But if she said that, Shion felt like she would have to acknowledge the kissing and clothes changing as well. That would be annoying.

“We’ll talk about that later. Someone’s coming.”

Although reluctant, Shion rebuttoned Mayo’s blouse as she sensed several people approaching. It would also be troublesome if Mayo caught a cold.

“Ah, I knew you’d be here.”

Five or six classmates entered the changing room. Although there were no more classes today, it seemed that their classmates had come to check on them after they had been late getting back.

“Sorry, sorry, we’ll be done soon.”

“We know you have trouble changing, but weren’t Kagura-san and Tennouji-san’s examinations awfully long?”

“Eh? Were they?”

“Over an hour is a bit much.”

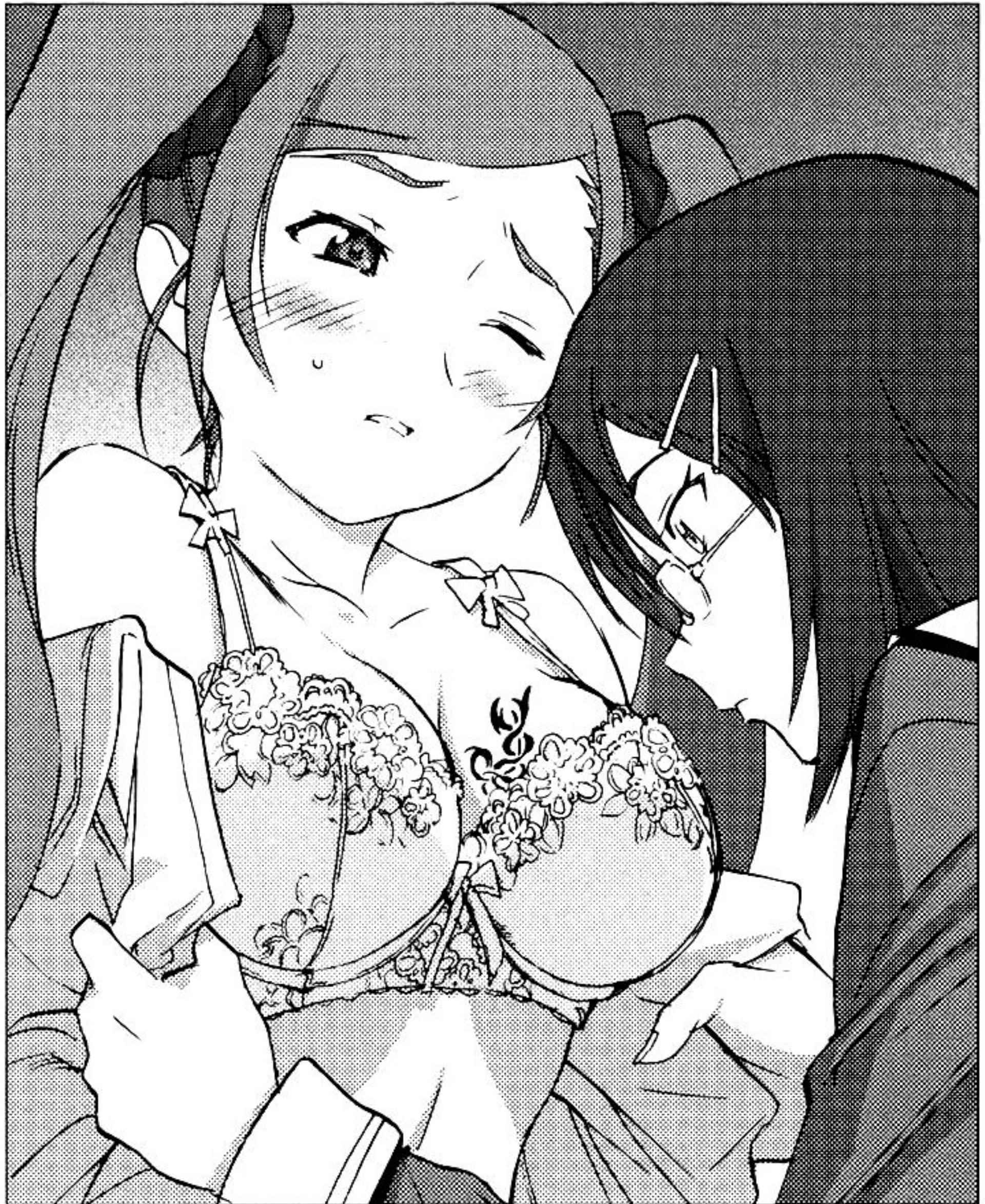
“We’re in the transfer group, so maybe they were just more thorough because of that.”

“And I was just getting a private exam – fuga!”

As though saying not to talk about unnecessary things, Shion covered Mayo’s mouth with her hand.

Students who had come up from middle school should have been examined any number of times before now, and the new spring admits should have been examined when they were enrolled. After all, Fuuka Academy only accepted people with super powers. Shion wanted to say that because her transfer was late, there had been more data to gather, but...

“Or maybe you’re receiving special treatment from the Academy.”





# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“Eh?”

Shion and Mayo instinctively searched for the person who had spoken. The tone had been challenging, but the voice had not sounded familiar

Someone noticed who was there and made a surprised squeak. Realizing who was standing in their midst, the classmates scattered to the sides.

Left in the center was a student with bluish hair. Her clean-cut features probably put her in the beauty category, but she had an aura that made her hard to approach.

“...Second year, Hinagiku Tomoe-san?”

Shion spoke the first name that came to mind. They hadn’t met, but Shion had listened to the rumors. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the rumors would have been heard even if she hadn’t wanted to hear them, due to the person in front of her having marched into the Student Council room alone.

“What business do you have with us?”

“Oh, you probably have an idea.”

“Something to do with the Suzaku Association?” Shion asked, getting straight to the point. At the sound of that name, the classmates retreated another two or three steps and grew extremely nervous. It seemed that even the new students had heard of the academy’s largest faction.

“It helps that you’re quick to understand.”

“If it’s about the incident yesterday, I don’t think we made any errors.”

“Ah, the incident with Homura Nagi. Well, we don’t have time to be playing with weak groups, you know. We want to clear the limited school battle quickly and crush the Student Council. And after that.....”

“After that?”

“Want to know?”

Seeing Shion’s interest, Tomoe smiled suggestively.

“If you enter our camp, I’ll tell you.”

“You’re scouting?”

“Like it says in *The Art of War*, win without fighting. For a weak group like yours, I don’t think it’s a bad deal.”

“Kuga-san is the one who would make that decision.”

“Kuga Natsuki? Can’t you just dump that good-for-nothing?”

“I don’t know what you mean by that. I’ve heard that when the Suzaku Association was defeated and disbanded by the Student Council two years ago, the only person who didn’t submit to the Student Council was that weak group’s Kuga Natsuki.”

At Shion’s response, Tomoe’s smile suddenly vanished.

“What a thing to say. I’d like you to not put the Suzaku Association from two years ago on the same level as the one I, Hinagiku Tomoe, am leading now. What about you with the handcuffs?”

“M-me!?”

“Just because your powers are a little strong, I don’t want you butting in with anything but your chest.”

“I’m not butting in!”

As Mayo thrust out her chest, a tragic comedy occurred. Perhaps because of the power of her G-cups, a button from her blouse flew off from the pressure and struck Tomoe right between the eyes!

“N-now you’ve done it!”

Holding a hand to her head, Tomoe shouted in rage.

“What impudence from the two of you! I suppose this is a declaration of war! I’ll remember this!”

After making her one-sided proclamation, she made a right about-face and vanished before anyone could say anything. It seemed impulsive for someone who had spoken about the Art of War, but perhaps that was her personality.

“The two of us?”

Holding down her breasts, Mayo looked uncomprehending. However, Shion was calm.

“This is fine. It would have happened sooner or later. Even if it had been Kuga-san.”



“This is a strange combination.”

Catching sight of the white table on the open terrace, Natsuki raised her voice in surprise.

Now that it was halfway through May, even Hokkaido had become spring-like, and more people were using the open terrace. For Natsuki, who disliked standing out, a change of pace was necessary.

On the table were a steaming steak and a black sesame pudding on a cute plate.

“What do you mean by that? What's that you have?”

The ponytail girl who'd ordered the steak pointed with a fork that still had a piece of meat attached. In Natsuki’s hand was a yellow tube.

“This is egg yolk and salad oil, with a little salt and pepper mixed in. Want to try it?”

“I don't want any mayonnaise!”

“Chi-”

Looking out of the corner of her eye, Natsuki saw that the black sesame pudding was being firmly guarded with a hand.

“Do you really think I'd just put it on?”

“If it’s Kuga-san.”

The girl who spoke as though implying that it were possible was high school second year, Higurashi Akane. And the ponytail girl consuming the steak was Sugiura Midori, same year.

The combination Natsuki had spoken about was the three of them, who had been together since before they’d started eating. Being a small campus, they were all acquainted with each other, but for the three to be together like this was rare.

“So what’s the business?”

Putting the yellow tube on the table, Natsuki sat down.

“Natsuki-chin, you’ve been hanging out with the young ones lately. Do you want the beautiful, eternal 17 year old, Midori-chan to tell you about the critical situation the Academy is facing?”

Although a difference of one or two years wasn't enough to be calling someone young, their generation was even more sensitive to age gaps than adults.



Because of Sugiura Midori's way of speaking and detailed knowledge of random things that had happened long ago, Natsuki had had doubts about her age in their first year. No matter how knowledgeable Midori was about them, Natsuki couldn't think that she'd been alive during the Yamato Court or Muromachi Shogunate periods - but what about the fact that she was also well-versed in the Bubble Era? Most of all, her way of announcing herself as a "beautiful girl" or "the eternal 17 year old" was definitely suspicious.

Of course, unlike the people around her, Midori herself didn't notice or try to change her way of talking. A unique person. You could say that she, like the Student Council's Fujino Shizuru but in a different way, was also a detached existence.

"Do you want to know too, Higurashi?"

"Yeah. It seems like there's been a flashy declaration of war."

Akane finally finished her pudding and put down her spoon at about the same time Midori put down her knife and fork. It was unusual for the normally quiet Akane to have interest in the Academy Battles, but everyone was probably the same in wanting to avoid the sparks.

"Even though people are talking about a declaration of war, it was against Fujino Shizuru's Student Council. No matter how many underlings Hinagiku has gathered, it'll probably just end up like it did two years ago."

There was a brief silence.

Midori and Akane exchanged a glance, then looked back to Natsuki.

"Hinagiku Tomoe did march into the Student Council room, and even delivered a written challenge. But that's not all, you know."

"Eh?"

"It's being said that one of your underlings delivered a counter-declaration after Tomoe said something about her huge breasts."

"What, Mayo did!?"

"Hey, don't shoot mayonnaise!"

Natsuki had unknowingly squeezed the tube. A yellow spray flew onto the table.

"Those girls..."

"Now, now. Besides, the glasses girl who was with her said something good enough to make you cry."

"That's a different issue."

Still frowning, Natsuki wiped off the table with a paper napkin, then resealed the cap on the tube.

"It'll be fun, like *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. You're like the Kingdom of Wei, caught between the great kingdoms of Shu and Wu."

It was a fitting example for the history-loving Midori. Right now, the Student Council was Shu, the Suzaku Association was Wu, and Wei was Natsuki's faction.

"You're having fun because you think it's about other people, aren't you?"

"Oh, not me. But it's gotten backwards, hasn't it. I really meant to ask you all about it."

"Sorry for being a negligent leader..."

"But the right to decide lies with Kuga-san, after all."

Although the look Natsuki gave Akane wasn't as annoyed as she would have them believe, Midori tried to arouse her interest further.

"But you know, there's something wrong with what you said just now, Natsuki-chin. 'It'll probably just end up like it did two years ago.' That doesn't sound like the Kuga Natsuki who stood up to the Student Council until the very end. Can it be that Fujino Shizuru did this and that to make you lose your..."

Seeing that Natsuki's hand was moving towards the yellow tube again, Midori let her words trail off.

"Ahahaha, joke, joke."

"It sounds like you're saying that we should join forces with the Suzaku Association to fight the Student Council."

"Well, from a combat strength perspective, that way would make it more competitive and interesting...I mean, I think that that would let us see a different result than last time."





# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“Are you unsatisfied with the Fujino administration? The reason I haven’t moved in two years is because I don’t think this calm Academy is a bad thing.”

“It isn’t. But I’m tired of it. There are good things like having three free meals and being able to meet similar people, but we’re really just birds in a cage.”

“That’s true, but.....that isn’t something that we can do anything about by going against the Student Council.”

An institution for teaching people with superhuman abilities how to adapt to society - such was Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy. At first glance it seemed like there were only good things about it, but the truth was that the students were shut away in a land far removed from civilization.

To attempt to open a hole in that system would be to go fight not only the Student Council, but also the organization that managed the Academy.

“Are you trying to become a revolutionary? And you’re dragging Higurashi with you.”

“It’s just the opposite. I was dragged in by Akane-chin.”

“What?”

“You’re exaggerating, Midori-chan. I just want a little more freedom. I said that if that’s impossible, revolution might be an answer.”

Natsuki was completely surprised.

When Midori said dangerous things, it could be taken half in jest. But when Akane, who wouldn’t kill an insect, said the word ’revolution’, it had a certain impact. If that sort of thinking spread around the Academy, what would happen?



As blue-white flames like the souls of the dead were lit, the small room’s inhabitants revealed themselves. A standing skeleton, a man with the skin removed from the left side of his face, a bunch of crawling insects.....and a boy with white hair.

“This is interesting. We were putting together the latest scientific facility, and something like this gets dropped in. Although this way is good because it seems a lot more like a school.”

“What are you doing acting like an old man in that school?”

This was Fuuka Academy’s Scientific Experiment Preparation Room. And using an alcohol lamp and net to grill a cuttlefish was Homura Nagi.

“Mmm, that smells good. You don’t need to be an old man or a kid to enjoy delicious food. And in the first place, I dislike being labeled like that. Don’t you agree, Tomoe-chan?”

“Don’t change the subject, Nagi. I came for information.”

Standing with one leg on a chair, Hinagiku Tomoe used her voice like a whip.

“The Suzaku Association sure is frightening. I was convinced I would be able to meet *that person*. Ah, kidding, kidding.”

Sensing Tomoe’s murderous intent, Nagi showed the palms of his hands.

“It seems that the Student Council already has various pieces of evidence.”

“Various?”

“Statements from the cultural club people, the handwriting analysis from the Secretary General’s forehead, that sort of thing.”

“Oh, that.”

Tomoe chuckled.

“I thought that if I attacked Suzushiro first, she’d go nuts and come charging in. I had a counterattack prepared, but it went to waste. Well, we still have our second and third plans for use against the Student Council, but I don’t like elements outside of my calculations.”

“Could that be the Kuga faction - I mean, Mayo-chan?”

Several days ago, Homura Nagi had acted as part of a give-and-take relationship with the Suzaku Association. Nagi’s goal had been the complete destruction of the wyvern statue. The battle with Kagura Mayo and the others had just been an afterthought. As Suzaku was planning to absorb the Kuga faction sooner or later, it hadn’t been a problem in and of itself. The problem was that they had been defeated, even though they had just been using mooks.

“I went to see her myself, but aside from the handcuffs there wasn’t anything special about her.”

’Even so, you ended up making a showy declaration of war in the changing room,’ Nagi refrained from saying. There wasn’t any point in putting Tomoe in an even worse mood.

“You shouldn’t judge her by the way she looks.”

“I know that. Even a backpack-carrying grade-schooler can toss a pro-wrestler, if they have superpowers.”

“There’s that, but there’s something essentially different about her.”

“Essentially?”

“I’ll tell you a scoop. Kagura Mayo isn’t just a weak group’s new member. She’s a MiKO who was called by the Academy itself for some major purpose. Wait - before you ask me any questions, that’s all I know. I’m still looking into it. But knowing that the Academy is behind her makes fighting with her even more exciting, doesn’t it? I love it - on one hand, the mysterious beautiful transfer student; on the other, heroes trying to bring revolution to the Academy.”

“Just whose side are you on?”

“I wonder. The winning side, I suppose.....whoops, my cuttlefish is burnt.”

As Nagi doused the alcohol lamp, something like an invisible scythe passed swiftly over him, and a human dummy’s head went tumbling to the floor. When he looked up, Hinagiku Tomoe had vanished.

“Oh well. What a waste. Want some?”

Picking up the head, Nagi offered it to the blackened cuttlefish.



“There’s a saying, ’A person may be a prodigy at 10, talented at 15, but after they pass 20 they’re just a regular person.’ Those people with superhuman powers are like that, more or less.”

Through the open curtains of the Principal’s Office, a crescent moon was visible. Looking at the numbers of a graph on his computer screen, Kanzaki Rei held a phone to his ear. The person on the other end of the closed line was Sagisawa Youko, who had examined the students.

“Yes, Principal. This field of research is still young and there aren’t many graduates yet, so I can’t make a conclusion, but that does appear to be the trend.”



Under guise of post-graduation support, follow-up examinations were being conducted on those who had left the nest. According to the survey, since becoming adults most of them saw the magnitude of their “power” gradually declining, and eventually it would disappear altogether.

“That is fine. This can serve to show to the outside that we’re not training monsters who will threaten society.”

“Their ‘power’ is strongest while they’re in school. High school students average a 30 point increase compared to when they were in middle school, and afterwards it begins to decline gradually - minus a few exceptions.”

“Hm. Which means that there’s significance in having them spend their dangerous teenage years here. Sagisawa-sensei, about those exceptions.”

“If you wish to know, look at the file called ‘MiKO 14’.”

Kanzaki’s fingers moved like separate lifeforms and entered the encrypted password to that file. Seeing the face of the student who appeared on the display, his eyes narrowed. There was what he had been waiting eagerly for.

“It’s getting late. Let’s leave the questions for tomorrow. Good night.”

“.....um, Principal...”

A hoarse voice called Kanzaki. Setting down the phone, he looked up at a fat man with an afro.

“You’re still here, Sakomizu-sensei?”

“Well, we still haven’t dealt with the security arrangements for the cultural festival..... As I reported earlier, the students are seriously agitated for the first time in a while.”

“There’s no need to suppress it unreasonably. As you no doubt heard just now, the students at this point are overflowing with ‘power’. We must let them expend it appropriately. Listen, observe instead of suppressing them. Oh, it appears that the Chairwoman is here.”

Sakomizu Kanji understood that this meant the conversation was at an end. Unsatisfied, he walked towards the door.

At the entrance, he exchanged greetings with Himeno Fumi.

“Thank you for your work, Sakomizu-sensei.”

Sakomizu turned to look at the young Chairwoman he’d just passed. It wasn’t just because of her candy-like voice. He’d felt like someone else had entered behind her.

However, he couldn’t see anyone but Fumi. Maybe he really was tired. Pushing up his pince-nez glasses, he left quickly.

“You came at a good time, Chairwoman. I don’t have anything to drink prepared, but I have a report as pleasing as good sake.”

Kanzaki’s voice showed his good humor.

“So there’s been a development?”

“Yes. The time is drawing near. All that’s left is to wait for the signal flare.”

“Congratulations. Your long hardships have finally borne fruit, haven’t they.....oh?”

Looking at the display, Fumi raised her eyebrows. The student shown there was different than she’d expected.

“Is this girl insurance? This prudence is like you.”

“As I said before, it’s just cowardice. I don’t want to be eaten yet.”



The next morning.

“This way, this way. Hurry, you two!”

“Even if you say that.....whoa, what’s this?”

“Sea fog. It happens a lot in the summer here, I’ve heard, but this is out of season.”

As soon as they’d left the dorm, the outside was pure white. Shion reseated her glasses, but of course that didn’t help her see through. After she’d gone ahead 30 meters, they could no longer see Suzuki Miya as any more than a vague shape.

Their classmate Miya had come to see Mayo and Shion a little after 6AM. Because of the time, they knew something unusual was happening.

“It’s terrible! Kuga-san has been abducted by the Suzaku Association.”

“Senpai!?”

Mayo, who had been half asleep, used *that technique* to quickly get dressed, then left with Shion who had just prepared coffee.

“But how do you know about us, Suzuki-san?”

“I was also in the changing room two days ago.”

“Acha~, everyone knows.”

“It’s because Kagura-san is so flashy.”

Hinagiku Tomoe had come striding boldly in through their classmates. Mayo had shot a button into Tomoe’s face. Having forgotten about it would be more unusual.

“Even so, it’s surprising,” Shion muttered. “I thought they’d come straight for us.”

Although called the Kuga faction, it consisted of only three people. It was unexpected for a large group like Suzaku to attack from the rear.

“.....no, that’s not it.”

“Shion-chan, hurry! We’ll lose sight of Suzuki-san!”

Suzuki Miya’s form was already buried in the fog. It was Northern Japan’s distinctive fog, formed when hot air was cooled over the ocean. As though purposefully, the deep, out-of-season fog had entered the campus grounds.

“We don’t need to hurry after her.”

“Eh?”

“Even though it’s just us, the enemy wants to use this fog to divide us even further.”

Shion took Mayo’s shackled hand and started walking into the fog. Although they couldn’t see more than 10 meters ahead, the warmth of their bodies felt like a guide.

“Who’s there? Suzuki-san?”

Mayo spoke towards a figure that rose from the fog, but clung to Shion when she realized how strange that shape was.

It’s sharp beak and eyes were like those of an eagle. However, its strong body was that of a lion.



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～



“Calm down. It’s a gryffon. A bronze statue of a mythical beast. Look, it’s standing on a pedestal.”

Looking closer, Mayo could see many strange shapes through the white veil.

“Basilisk, minotaur, dragon. All fictional creatures. It’s like a zoo of illusions.”

“Oh, that’s right. This is the courtyard.”

Mayo remembered the day she’d arrived at the Academy. These statues had been the first to greet her. Farther ahead would be the arched gate.

“So, Kuga-senpai is off campus?”

“Not necessarily. Whether or not Kuga-san has actually been kidnapped, it’s a method to draw us out. Look, we’ll know soon.”

“Eh? Oh, you’re right. Hey~!”

Finally catching sight of people, Mayo waved. There were two of them. Suzuki Miya and Kuga Natsuki. Believing that was who they were, Mayo increased her pace.

“Sorry, Kagura-san, Tennouji-san,” Miya said while sticking out her tongue unabashedly.

“Good morning, pitiful kittens.”

The other person who emerged from the fog was not Natsuki. It was Hinagiku Tomoe, as haughty as she had been in the changing room. Judging by Miya’s attitude, she had been working with Tomoe from the beginning.

“You know what our business is. The declaration of war has already been made, after all.”

“Where’s Kuga-san?”

“Where indeed. If you win, I, Tomoe-sama, might tell you.”

“In that case, we’ll have you tell us soon. Suzaku being a large group, I heard that you specialized in group attacks, but with Suzuki-san included it’s just the two of you. Can you win?”

“You impudent first-year! Just the two of us? Look around you!”

Tomoe’s pace did not crumble in front of Shion’s provocation, as was to be expected of someone who’d been a staunch member of the Suzaku Association since middle school.

The ones to be surprised were, in fact, Mayo and Shion. They expected to see Tomoe’s underlings emerging from the fog or the shadows cast by the statues - however....

The rustle of flapping wings.

A low growl.

Heavy footsteps.

Powerful noises came from all around them.

“Sh-Shion-chan, the statues are moving!”

“It can’t be!”

Surrounding Mayo and Shion were not humans, but mythical beasts stepping down from their pedestals. The gryffon opened its beak; the minotaur raised its horns. The pre-revolution feast was beginning.

**To be continued...**



# 舞・HIME DESTINY

## 龍の巫女

### 第五話 「闇のスパイラル」



CHAPTER 5:  
SPIRAL OF DARKNESS

原作/  
**矢立 肇**

企画/  
**サンライズ**

キャラクターデザイン/  
**久行宏和**

著者/  
**伊吹秀明**

イラスト/  
**目黒三吉**

さあ、血の宴をはじめよう。  
眼前には、凶悪さで世界中に名を馳せた幻獣が迫る。  
ミノタウロスは角で身を穿とうとする。  
グリフォンは鋭いカギ爪で八つ裂きにせんと歩み来る。  
雛菊 巴は笑ってる。凶悪な顔で笑ってる。  
学園抗争における学内の最大派閥・朱雀会は真夜たちを着実に攻め立てる。  
その時、真夜としおんの危機を救ったのは意外な人物だった――。

さあ、血の宴をはじめよう。  
眼前には、凶悪さで世界中に名を馳せた幻獣が迫る。  
ミノタウロスは角で身を穿とうとする。  
グリフォンは鋭いカギ爪で八つ裂きにせんと歩み来る。  
雛菊 巴は笑ってる。凶悪な顔で笑ってる。  
学園抗争における学内の最大派閥・朱雀会は真夜たちを着実に攻め立てる。  
その時、真夜としおんの危機を救ったのは意外な人物だった――。





It was early morning.

Unseasonable fog from the Sea of Okhotsk had crept over the mountains and infiltrated Fuuka Academy. Thicker than the usual morning mist, it had turned the world white. But the tension between the two groups in the courtyard was thicker yet.

With Suzuki Miya at her side, Hinagiku Tomoe spoke to the first-years in a challenging tone. “You transfer students don’t know your place. If you don’t want to get hurt, surrender now and join my army.”

“Who would want to join forces with a coward!?”

Her twintails bobbing, Kagura Mayo firmly rejected the demand. Having heard that Kuga Natsuki had been taken captive by the Suzaku Association, Mayo and Shion had been drawn out by Miya.

“Heh heh, a coward? I’d prefer you call me a brilliant strategist. You have nowhere to run.”

“What!? Whoa!”

A black shape leapt out of the fog. It was a giant with muscles like armor. Jumping sideways, Mayo managed to get out of the way of its sharp horns.

“It’s a minotaur. A bull-headed monster from Greek myth. Because it was so vicious, King Minos sealed it in a labyrinth, and sacrificed nine boys and girls...”

Before Shion had finished explaining, sharp talons slashed down from above. It was a monster with the upper body of an eagle and the lower body of a lion. Lying flat on the ground, the two were able to avoid the deadly talons.

“A griffin! The name comes from the Greek word for “hook”. According to *The Travels of Sir John Mandeville*, it’s as strong as eight lions and one hundred eagles.”

“Shion-chan, thanks for the explanation. Waah, there’s no time to listen though!” Mayo shouted, her expression changing. In addition to the minotaur and the griffin, countless other creatures were encircling them within the fog. The strange statues that had filled the courtyard had been revived as mythical beasts and were now attacking them.

“Impossible! There’s no way these things can exist!”

“Oh, what are you saying? Isn’t that what the outside world thinks of us? People with superpowers shouldn’t exist either.”

Tomoe’s words pierced Mayo’s heart. A ridiculous television program. A hysterical know-it-all comedian. The cold looks of society. These images flowed through her head. Not on television, but in reality.....

“Behind you!”

At Shion’s warning, Mayo threw up a shield, an invisible barrier of psychic force. However, the otherworldly enemies breached it with ease. Mayo dove to the ground, but the griffin’s talons just barely caught her shoulder. Fresh blood flowed from the tear in her uniform.

“Uh!”

“Mayo!”

“I-I’m alright,” Mayo said, but as she stood, holding her shoulder, her face was twisted with pain.

“I’ll give you one more chance. If you don’t want to get hurt any more, surrender.”

Tomoe was trying to shake them into giving up.

Shion realized that Tomoe was used to this sort of battle. As to be expected of the Suzaku Association, the Academy’s largest group. She had been expecting them to make some kind of move, but she’d never expected something on this scale, not to mention a surprise attack!

The legendary monsters were slowly closing the circle. It was as though they were waiting for their master’s order to attack. Speaking of which, what sort of superpower was this? To think that someone had the power to breathe life into inanimate statues and control them freely...

“Well, how about it? There isn’t any reason for new transfers like you to show loyalty to someone like Kuga Natsuki, right?”

Tomoe sounded sure of victory.

Not knowing their opponent’s true abilities, the two were cornered. What to do? If all those strong monsters attacked at once.... At that moment, when Shion thought that there was no way out...

“I can’t let that go, Hinagiku Tomoe.”

A voice broke in.

Who!? Mayo searched the fog for who had spoken. ....There! The silhouette of a person standing between the bull-head and the eagle-head. A parka over a high school girl’s uniform. She’d thought the voice was familiar.

“Kuga-senpai! What are you doing here? Weren’t you kidnapped?”

“That was just a story to bring us out here. Kuga-san was in her dorm sleeping like a log until I woke her up with telepathy.”

Shion told Mayo everything. When the battle had started, there hadn’t been any time to explain.

“Woke me up? Just when I was getting a good night’s sleep, it sounded like an explosion went off right next to my ear!”

Looking grumpy one moment, Natsuki’s expression made a complete turnaround.

“Anyways, Hinagiku, what was that you said about having no reason to ‘show loyalty to someone like Kuga Natsuki.’? What was that, ‘right?’”

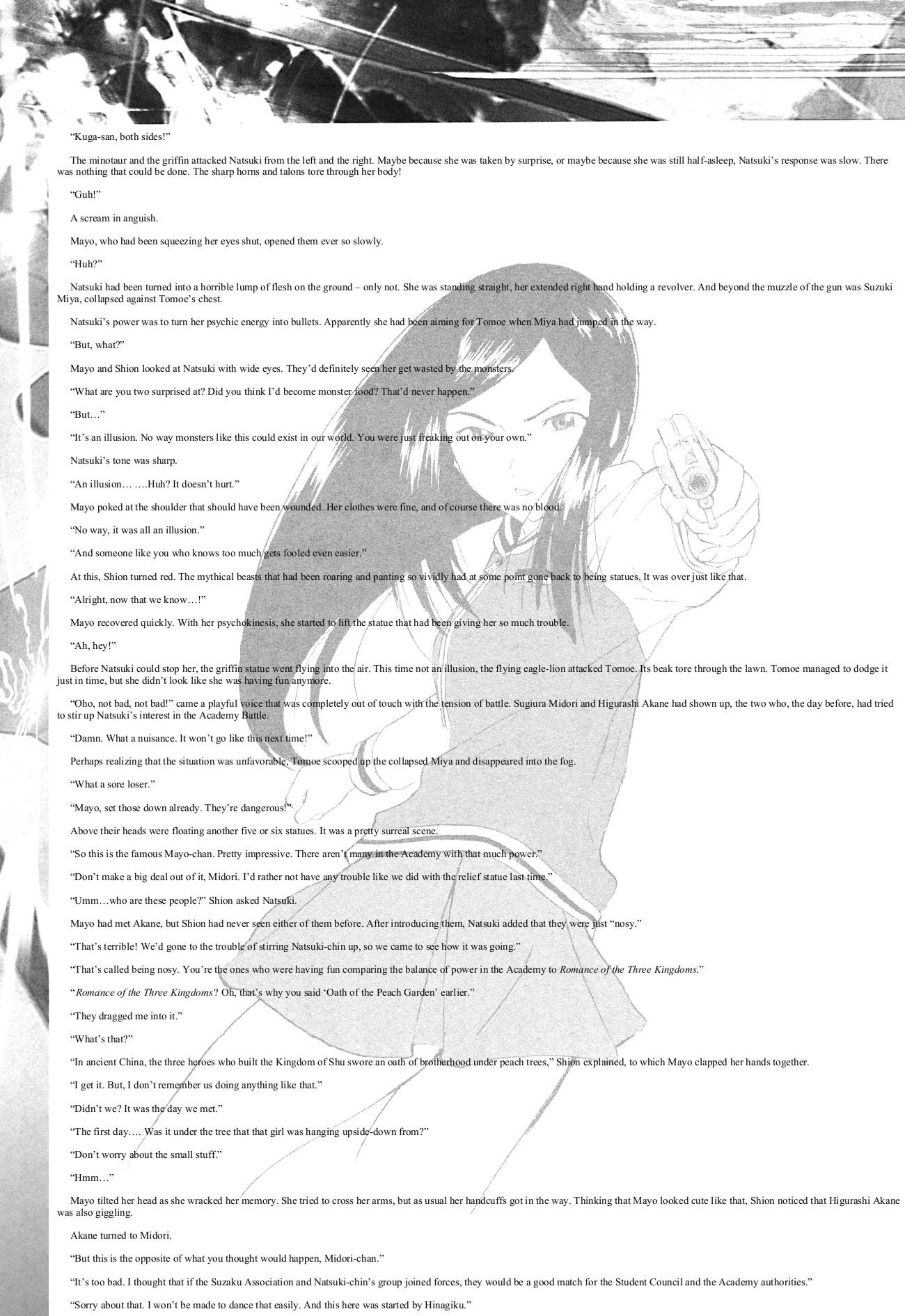
“Oh, it’s the truth, isn’t it?”

“I wonder. It looks like you Suzaku people don’t understand what binds us together. Don’t you know about the ‘Oath of the Peach Garden’? We’re all sworn sisters.”

“What’s this nonsense!? In that case, I’ll just crush you all. Finish them!”

Enraged, Tomoe commanded the mythical beasts.





“Kuga-san, both sides!”

The minotaur and the griffin attacked Natsuki from the left and the right. Maybe because she was taken by surprise, or maybe because she was still half-asleep, Natsuki’s response was slow. There was nothing that could be done. The sharp horns and talons tore through her body!

“Guh!”

A scream in anguish.

Mayo, who had been squeezing her eyes shut, opened them ever so slowly.

“Huh?”

Natsuki had been turned into a horrible lump of flesh on the ground – only not. She was standing straight, her extended right hand holding a revolver. And beyond the muzzle of the gun was Suzuki Miya, collapsed against Tomoe’s chest.

Natsuki’s power was to turn her psychic energy into bullets. Apparently she had been aiming for Tomoe when Miya had jumped in the way.

“But, what?”

Mayo and Shion looked at Natsuki with wide eyes. They’d definitely seen her get wasted by the monsters.

“What are you two surprised at? Did you think I’d become monster food? That’d never happen.”

“But…”

“It’s an illusion. No way monsters like this could exist in our world. You were just freaking out on your own.”

Natsuki’s tone was sharp.

“An illusion… ….Huh? It doesn’t hurt.”

Mayo poked at the shoulder that should have been wounded. Her clothes were fine, and of course there was no blood.

“No way, it was all an illusion.”

“And someone like you who knows too much gets fooled even easier.”

At this, Shion turned red. The mythical beasts that had been roaring and panting so vividly had at some point gone back to being statues. It was over just like that.

“Alright, now that we know…!”

Mayo recovered quickly. With her psychokinesis, she started to lift the statue that had been giving her so much trouble.

“Ah, hey!”

Before Natsuki could stop her, the griffin statue went flying into the air. This time not an illusion, the flying eagle-lion attacked Tomoe. Its beak tore through the lawn. Tomoe managed to dodge it just in time, but she didn’t look like she was having fun anymore.

“Oho, not bad, not bad!” came a playful voice that was completely out of touch with the tension of battle. Sugiura Midori and Higurashi Akane had shown up, the two who, the day before, had tried to stir up Natsuki’s interest in the Academy Battle.

“Damn. What a nuisance. It won’t go like this next time!”

Perhaps realizing that the situation was unfavorable, Tomoe scooped up the collapsed Miya and disappeared into the fog.

“What a sore loser.”

“Mayo, set those down already. They’re dangerous!”

Above their heads were floating another five or six statues. It was a pretty surreal scene.

“So this is the famous Mayo-chan. Pretty impressive. There aren’t many in the Academy with that much power.”

“Don’t make a big deal out of it, Midori. I’d rather not have any trouble like we did with the relief statue last time.”

“Umm…who are these people?” Shion asked Natsuki.

Mayo had met Akane, but Shion had never seen either of them before. After introducing them, Natsuki added that they were just “nosy.”

“That’s terrible! We’d gone to the trouble of stirring Natsuki-chin up, so we came to see how it was going.”

“That’s called being nosy. You’re the ones who were having fun comparing the balance of power in the Academy to *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*.”

“*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*? Oh, that’s why you said ‘Oath of the Peach Garden’ earlier.”

“They dragged me into it.”

“What’s that?”

“In ancient China, the three heroes who built the Kingdom of Shu swore an oath of brotherhood under peach trees,” Shion explained, to which Mayo clapped her hands together.

“I get it. But, I don’t remember us doing anything like that.”

“Didn’t we? It was the day we met.”

“The first day…. Was it under the tree that that girl was hanging upside-down from?”

“Don’t worry about the small stuff.”

“Hmm…”

Mayo tilted her head as she wracked her memory. She tried to cross her arms, but as usual her handcuffs got in the way. Thinking that Mayo looked cute like that, Shion noticed that Higurashi Akane was also giggling.

Akane turned to Midori.

“But this is the opposite of what you thought would happen, Midori-chan.”

“It’s too bad. I thought that if the Suzaku Association and Natsuki-chin’s group joined forces, they would be a good match for the Student Council and the Academy authorities.”

“Sorry about that. I won’t be made to dance that easily. And this here was started by Hinagiku.”





“Can I ask something?” Shion cut into the upperclassmen’s conversation. “Did you talk to the Suzaku Association about joining forces with us?”

“Nope.”

“Why not? There’s no point in just talking to Kuga-san about it.”

“But we still don’t know who’s in charge of Suzaku,” Midori said nonchalantly. “Anyway - Tennouji-san, right? You’re looking a little pale, and you’re sweating like crazy.”

“Eh? ....I-I’m fine...”

*What’s wrong?* Shion rubbed her eyes and adjusted her glasses. She was seeing two of the second-year called Sugiura Midori. *Her reddish hair is in a ponytail. A pony is a small horse, but that luxurious, bouncing hair is more like the tail of a wild horse. It’s shaking wildly. No, maybe I’m the one that’s shaking...*

Shion heard Mayo asking, “But, isn’t their leader that Hinagiku Tomoe...,” but her voice was getting farther away. The last thing Shion heard was Natsuki and the others calling her name...

Tennouji Shion suddenly collapsed on the lawn.



“There, how’s that?”

“Hmm... Another one and a half meters to the right, I think.”

Following Higurashi Akane’s directions, Mayo moved the statue again. It was the griffin statue that had been attacking them earlier. Although it was a big statue, about two meters tall when on its pedestal, Mayo’s psychokinesis moved it about easily as she tried to put it back in place.

“You know, Kagura-san’s power really is impressive.”

“Come on, let me finish. I want to go back to Shion-chan.”

Mayo and the others had carried the unconscious Shion to the infirmary.

After the school doctor, Sagisawa Yoko, had confirmed that Shion wasn’t in danger, Natsuki had ordered Mayo to clean up the courtyard. Mayo had been reluctant, of course, and if Akane hadn’t offered to help, she might have just sat there without doing anything.

“Kuga-senpai is making too big a deal out of it. She said that if we left it there, the Principal would make a fuss again.”

“Well, there was the incident with the relief statue, you know. After it was broken once with psychokinesis, it got completely pulverized.”

“Hmm...that’s a mystery. Who was the culprit after all?”

“Eh?”

Akane stared at Mayo with a surprised expression.

“Is there something on my face? Now that I think about it, I was woken up early this morning, so I didn’t have time to look in a mirror...”

“No, there’s nothing. ....They haven’t found who destroyed the relief, but it was probably broken during a battle like the one earlier.”

“Then it must have been those Suzaku Association people. They’re so violent.”

“.....Maybe...”

Akane and Mayo looked over the battlefield one more time. The statues were all back in place. The lawn was kind of torn up, but it shouldn’t turn into a big fuss like with the relief.

“Midori brought me out this morning, but to tell the truth it was a little frightening.”

“We were fighting for our lives too. If senpai had been late... Well, it was because I’d thought she had been kidnapped. Geez, Shion-chan didn’t tell me anything.”

“Kagura-san, why didn’t you separate from Kuga-san?”

“Huh? What do you mean?”

When Mayo returned the question, Akane thought briefly, then rephrased it...

“Sorry, I asked you something strange. I don’t mean it in the same way as Hinagiku-san did, but I was just wondering why you two stay with Kuga-san even after being put in all this danger.”

“Why? Hmm....I wonder...”

*Tilting her head slightly, Mayo thought back to when she’d met Natsuki. I think it was on the stairs. She saw the panty-lowering battle I was having with that girl Yuuki Nao. ....That’s right, I was pretty much coerced.*

“What’s wrong? Your face is all red?”

“I-it’s nothing! Eheheh.”

Thinking back one more time, Mayo suddenly remembered. It hadn’t worked, but Natsuki had tried to remove the handcuffs for her.

“Before I came to this Academy, I had never met anyone with the same sort of power. A lot happened at my last school, and at the school before that.... I guess I was just happy when I met the Council President and Kuga-san. I think Shion-chan feels the same.”

“.....I see. Me too.”

“You too?”

“I had a lot happen to me too. Even though I became close to a normal person, the end couldn’t have gone any other way.”

“‘Close’”? Akane-san, you had someone like that.....Ah, sorry. Of course you did. You’re pretty after all. But, what do you mean ‘the end’. Ah, sorry, sorry.”

Watching Mayo caught in her infinite loop, Akane laughed.

“That’s right. It would have been better if I’d never had any superpowers.”

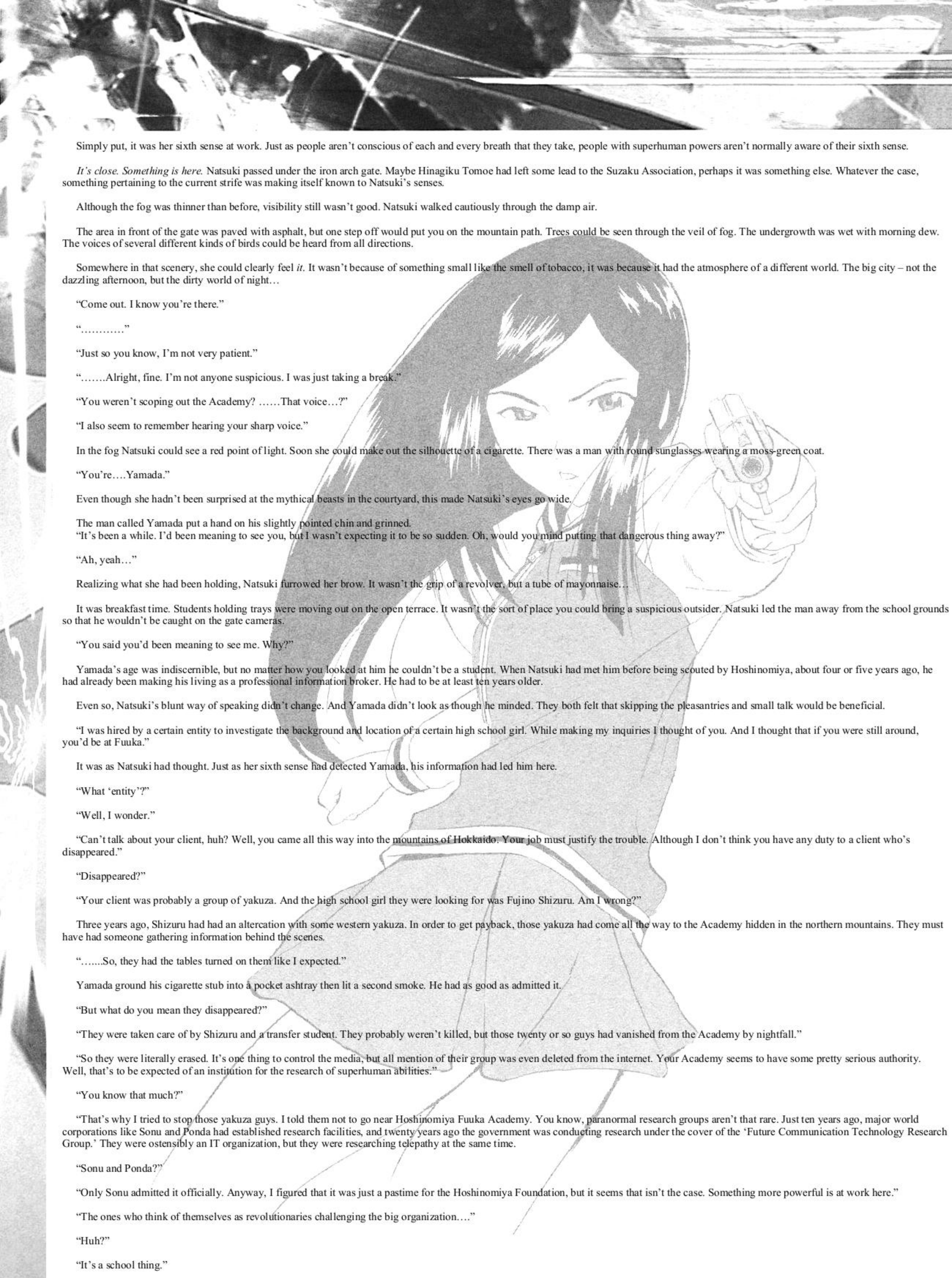
“Y-yeah! If I just had the power to run a hundred meters in nine seconds, no one would pay too much attention.”

Nine seconds would get you an Olympic Gold Medal. That would make you stand out in a different way, Akane thought while looking at Mayo’s full breasts.



After making sure that Shion was stable, Natsuki pressed Midori into looking after her then returned to the school gate alone.





Simply put, it was her sixth sense at work. Just as people aren't conscious of each and every breath that they take, people with superhuman powers aren't normally aware of their sixth sense.

*It's close. Something is here.* Natsuki passed under the iron arch gate. Maybe Hinagiku Tomoe had left some lead to the Suzaku Association, perhaps it was something else. Whatever the case, something pertaining to the current strife was making itself known to Natsuki's senses.

Although the fog was thinner than before, visibility still wasn't good. Natsuki walked cautiously through the damp air.

The area in front of the gate was paved with asphalt, but one step off would put you on the mountain path. Trees could be seen through the veil of fog. The undergrowth was wet with morning dew. The voices of several different kinds of birds could be heard from all directions.

Somewhere in that scenery, she could clearly feel *it*. It wasn't because of something small like the smell of tobacco, it was because it had the atmosphere of a different world. The big city – not the dazzling afternoon, but the dirty world of night...

"Come out. I know you're there."

"....."

"Just so you know, I'm not very patient."

".....Alright, fine. I'm not anyone suspicious. I was just taking a break."

"You weren't scoping out the Academy? .....That voice...?"

"I also seem to remember hearing your sharp voice."

In the fog Natsuki could see a red point of light. Soon she could make out the silhouette of a cigarette. There was a man with round sunglasses wearing a moss-green coat.

"You're....Yamada."

Even though she hadn't been surprised at the mythical beasts in the courtyard, this made Natsuki's eyes go wide.

The man called Yamada put a hand on his slightly pointed chin and grinned.

"It's been a while. I'd been meaning to see you, but I wasn't expecting it to be so sudden. Oh, would you mind putting that dangerous thing away?"

"Ah, yeah..."

Realizing what she had been holding, Natsuki furrowed her brow. It wasn't the grip of a revolver, but a tube of mayonnaise...

It was breakfast time. Students holding trays were moving out on the open terrace. It wasn't the sort of place you could bring a suspicious outsider. Natsuki led the man away from the school grounds so that he wouldn't be caught on the gate cameras.

"You said you'd been meaning to see me. Why?"

Yamada's age was indiscernible, but no matter how you looked at him he couldn't be a student. When Natsuki had met him before being scouted by Hoshinomiya, about four or five years ago, he had already been making his living as a professional information broker. He had to be at least ten years older.

Even so, Natsuki's blunt way of speaking didn't change. And Yamada didn't look as though he minded. They both felt that skipping the pleasantries and small talk would be beneficial.

"I was hired by a certain entity to investigate the background and location of a certain high school girl. While making my inquiries I thought of you. And I thought that if you were still around, you'd be at Fuuka."

It was as Natsuki had thought. Just as her sixth sense had detected Yamada, his information had led him here.

"What 'entity'?"

"Well, I wonder."

"Can't talk about your client, huh? Well, you came all this way into the mountains of Hokkaido. Your job must justify the trouble. Although I don't think you have any duty to a client who's disappeared."

"Disappeared?"

"Your client was probably a group of yakuza. And the high school girl they were looking for was Fujino Shizuru. Am I wrong?"

Three years ago, Shizuru had had an altercation with some western yakuza. In order to get payback, those yakuza had come all the way to the Academy hidden in the northern mountains. They must have had someone gathering information behind the scenes.

".....So, they had the tables turned on them like I expected."

Yamada ground his cigarette stub into a pocket ashtray then lit a second smoke. He had as good as admitted it.

"But what do you mean they disappeared?"

"They were taken care of by Shizuru and a transfer student. They probably weren't killed, but those twenty or so guys had vanished from the Academy by nightfall."

"So they were literally erased. It's one thing to control the media, but all mention of their group was even deleted from the internet. Your Academy seems to have some pretty serious authority. Well, that's to be expected of an institution for the research of superhuman abilities."

"You know that much?"

"That's why I tried to stop those yakuza guys. I told them not to go near Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy. You know, paranormal research groups aren't that rare. Just ten years ago, major world corporations like Sonu and Ponda had established research facilities, and twenty years ago the government was conducting research under the cover of the 'Future Communication Technology Research Group.' They were ostensibly an IT organization, but they were researching telepathy at the same time.

"Sonu and Ponda?"

"Only Sonu admitted it officially. Anyway, I figured that it was just a pastime for the Hoshinomiya Foundation, but it seems that isn't the case. Something more powerful is at work here."

"The ones who think of themselves as revolutionaries challenging the big organization...."

"Huh?"

"It's a school thing."



# 舞・HIME DESTINY 龍の巫女

Natsuki was thinking about the Suzaku Association, which was baring its fangs at the Academy itself. And also about Sugiura Midori and the others who were trying to stir things up like some kind of game.

“By the way, you said that the yakuza were taken care of by Fujino Shizuru and a transfer student. I imagine that transfer student’s name is Kagura Mayo.”

“How do you know that?”

“It’s a long story.”

Natsuki looked at her wristwatch. There was only a little time before the end of breakfast and the beginning of first period. Even though it was a school for those with superpowers, there were still normal classes to go to. She could cut, but she felt that it would be bad to draw the Academy’s attention.

“I’m staying in the town at the foot of the mountain. We’ll probably see each other again soon.”

“Watch yourself. It was overshadowed by the yakuza attack, but it seems that a car also exploded on the day Mayo came.”

Yamada had already started walking, but at Natsuki’s warning he turned around.

“I’ll be extra cautious. I don’t mean it as a token of thanks, but I’ll tell you one thing. I’m not here because of work.”

“You’re not?”

“My clients are gone. Of course, I’m not here to take revenge for them. I gave them Fujino Shizuru’s location. That’s all the contact we had. What they did with it doesn’t matter to me. ....However, I’d thought I’d found Fujino myself, but it seems that wasn’t the case. Someone fed me the information as part of a plan to bring them here. I was used.”



“Why?”

“Don’t know. That’s what I want to find out.”

“An information broker’s pride?”

“Something like that.”

As she watched Yamada’s retreating form, Natsuki thought about what he’d said. The yakuza’s objective had been revenge on Shizuru, but if Yamada was right, the whole thing had been a setup. Since he knew Kagura Mayo’s name, he probably knew that she was the key.

“Was not asking me about her just now also his pride?”

Even if he had asked, what could Natsuki have told him about Mayo? Handcuffs that wouldn’t come off. A loli face and incongruously large breasts. Loud laughter that would turn into crying. Immense power that she couldn’t remember using.

“I guess I don’t really know anything about Mayo either....”

Turning, Natsuki headed back towards the gate. The fog had cleared, but she felt like the veil of mystery over the academy had only gotten thicker.



## Case 1

The oldest record of a dragon in Japan. According to the *Nihon Shoki* (Japan’s oldest history), in the first year of Empress Saimei’s reign (655CE) a dragon carrying a person was seen flying from Mt. Katsuragi to Mt. Ikoma.

## Case 9

According to the *Konjaku Monogatari* (a collection of stories written during the Heian period), when Kyoto was suffering from drought, Kobo-Daishi Kukai went to the Shinsen-en to beg the ‘Kindly Dragon Queen’ for rain. There is also a description of a dragon killing tengu.

## Case 43

In the *Angya Kaidan Bukuro* (Mysterious Pilgrimage Stories) it is recorded that the Edo Period haiku poet Mukai Kyorai, on his journey to Kishu, saw a giant serpent in the form of a human reaching up to heaven.

“A giant serpent? Before the *Wakan Sansai Zue* (an encyclopedia) defined them in the 18th century, the distinction between dragons and giant serpents was unclear. There’s also the saying that ‘A serpent that lives in the sea for a millennium and on a mountain for a millennium becomes a dragon.’ ....That’s right, in *Anchi and Kiyohime* from the *Dojoji Engi Emaki* (Picture Scrolls Recording Omens from Dojoji Temple), Kiyohime was more like a dragon than a serpent. ....Hm?”

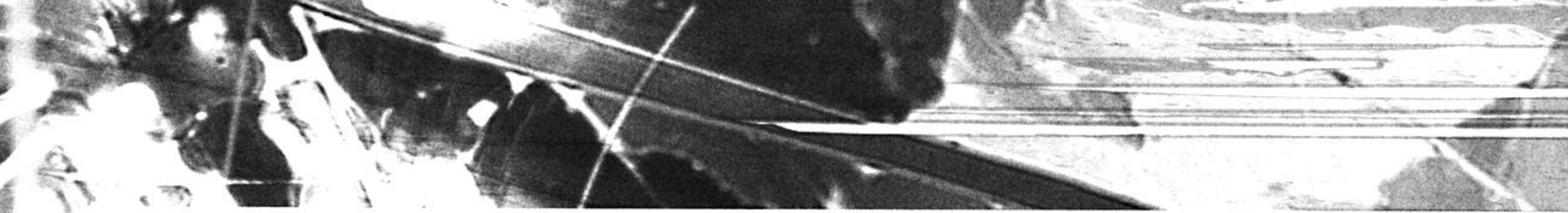


学園内で大きな力を持つ派閥「朱雀会」にて重要なポジションにいる人物。執拗なまでに真夜を狙う彼女の真意は……?



杉浦 雪「ゆきうら・みどり」  
十七歳。十七歳。十七歳。常にフレンドリーな姿勢を崩さない飄々とした少女。彼女の特殊能力はまだ謎。





Shizuru looked up from the documents she had been reading.

“If you were there, you could have said something.”

The Student Council Room was quiet during lunch break. The May light coming in through the windows illuminated the visitor. Neatly cut bangs and severe eyes under glasses. Wearing a simple high school men’s uniform, Okuzaki Akira sat himself on the desk.

“Well, you were so involved in your reading. It’s quieter than usual here.”

“That’s because the budget work for the culture festival is over.”

“Hmm...”

Akira casually grabbed a magazine from the pile sitting on the desk and leafed through it. It was a fashion magazine with articles like “*Summer Coordinating – My Must-follow Fashion Rules*” by a famous model and “*How to Make-Up for a Lovable Face.*”

“So even though you dress like that, you’re still interested after all?”

“W-who’s interested!?”

Akira tossed the magazine aside. Though it had been thrown violently, it of course settled neatly into its previous position.

“Well, how about this one?”

Shizuru pulled out a different magazine. It was a magazine about “aesthetics” with full-color illustrations of slender pretty boys.

“What are these things doing here anyway!?”

“They were confiscated from students.”

The magazines and comics that made up the pile had all been taken from students who had been reading them during class.

The Academy store had a book corner, but it wasn’t particularly well stocked. There were no bookstores nearby, and even if you ordered something from the internet, everything was checked by the Academy. So it was a mystery how all of these magazines had been brought in.

“Of course, it should probably be expected of our students,” said Shizuru.

“Although it seems that they’re also bringing in things besides books.”

Akira was holding a small vinyl bag with pills and capsules.

“It’s mostly just knockoff designer drugs,” Shizuru explained, “but there’s also stuff like ecstasy and 2CB mixed in. This Mexican mushroom here is a hundred times more powerful than cannabis, so I’m told. I think the active ingredient is psilocybin...”

“Keep that away from me!”

“Don’t be so frightened. No one understands that even without relying on these drugs, you can feel as good as you want...”

“You should have realized by now that you’re the most dangerous around here.”

“You’re so mean,” Shizuru replied with a broad smile. “You could say that contraband is like a barometer for the school’s discontent. Looking at this amount, I feel like something is about to happen.”

“Oh, so there’s no need for me to tell you about it.”

“Let’s hear it anyway.”

Okuzaki Akira had just moved up to the high school last spring. He’d been known as a sharp-looking pretty boy since junior high, but he had a certain secret that Shizuru had used to rope him into acting as her eyes. It was hard to say whether he was lucky or unlucky that his abilities made him an excellent spy

“They seem to be stepping up their plans,” said Akira, referring to the Suzaku Association and their plans to rise up during the culture festival.

Having grown significantly larger by absorbing weak groups, it was only a matter of time before Suzaku and the Student Council went head-to-head. It had been assumed that the time of greatest danger would be during the culture festival, when the Council would have its hands full. If a major school event were thrown into chaos, the Council would have its reputation crushed.

But now they’re moving up their schedule?

“They’ve ordered everyone down to the lowest lackey to keep their schedules open for the day before the festival.”

“The day before? Do they mean to take us by surprise? Or is there a different reason?”

“I haven’t learned that much. Don’t you have anything?”

“I have an idea that I’m looking at...”

“Like I thought.”

“It’s just a hunch, though.”

“You shouldn’t make light of...hm?” Akira had poured tea from an electric pot, but just as he was about to take a sip his gaze fell on Shizuru’s desk. There was a stack of papers there that contrasted sharply with the gaudy magazines.

“Aren’t those what I borrowed from the Principal before?”

“That was a big help.”

“So what are they about?”

“Records of dragon sightings in Japan, to put it simply.”

“Dragons, you mean those long things with mustaches? Who would have seen fantasy creatures like that?”

“There have been instances. The oldest is in the *Nihon Shoki*. The most recent is from the 1960s, almost fifty years ago. I have about sixty examples. It seems that Hokkaido’s Ryujinmisaki (Dragon God Cape) was named after a legend of a dragon sighting.”

“Here in Hokkaido?”

“It’s also interesting that these documents were being kept locked away.”

“Yeah, there were also a bunch of old books written in foreign languages. Oh, and it also seems that someone else had broken in before me. You know, when the Secretary General was knocked out.”



The other day, Suzushiro Haruka had been attacked by someone. It was pretty certain that the assailant had been the Suzaku Association’s Hinagiku Tomoe.

“If Hinagiku-san has been going into the Principal’s ‘secret archives’,” Shizuru mused, “then it’s a safe bet that Suzaku is investigating the Academy’s secrets too.”

“This is nuts. To think that what the Principal was keeping tucked away - secrets you would risk danger to sniff out – was just a bunch of fake records. Even in the off chance that they’re real, all that was a long time ago.”

“Fifty years ago was a fair bit after the war, and the bullet train was already running. It’s not exactly ancient history. And what if there were someone who had seen a dragon – not fifty years ago, but in the present?”

“No way.”

“It’s just a hunch.”

“.....I give up.”

Akira, who had been about to say that you shouldn’t make light of your hunches, frowned.

Shizuru herself wasn’t completely sure. However, the references to dragons that kept popping up were intriguing. And what’s more – she had seen them once. The chain that had stopped the blade that she had swung with perfect confidence. That transfer student’s handcuffs had been in the shape of dragons.



The Academy was filled with the sound of hammers striking nails and the students’ excited voices. Tomorrow was the first day of the culture festival. On this last day of preparations, classes had ended in the morning, with the afternoon devoted to setting up the exhibits for each class and club.

Not having anything in particular to do, Mayo and Shion wandered about the school looking at posters and dodging students carrying cardboard boxes. A savory smell reached their noses, telling them that some of the concession stands had finished setting up.

“Ah, it’s oden!” Mayo said while sniffing the air.

“Yeah. Oden is normally eaten in fall and winter, but since it’s still chilly I suppose it’s alright.”

“You can say that again.”

“Oden makes me remember a fall festival at night. The first kind I had was miso oden.”

“Me too! I was there too, you know. We met at the festival, remember?”

“Eh...”

Mayo was still constantly insisting that they were childhood friends. Normally Shion normally denied it bluntly, but this time she stopped.

“Are you still feeling sick?” Mayo asked the silent Shion.

It was a week after their fight with the Suzaku Association in the courtyard.

They had been reassured that Shion’s sudden collapse had been nothing more than anemia, but she had been out of classes for three days. Even if there were no external injuries, superpower battles could cause damage that was invisible to the naked eye, so Mayo was worried.

“Shion-chan?”

“.....Hm? I was just thinking that I bet Kuga-san puts mayonnaise on oden too.”

“Uwah, no way! But, I wouldn’t put it past her.”

“Right?”

Imagining the scene, the two laughed.

“Hey, let’s go up.”

At Shion’s proposal, they went up to the roof of the school building.

Hoshinomiya Fuuka Academy was located in the mountains, far from any towns. Comprising research facilities as well, the Academy grounds were quite large and dotted with modern-looking libraries and dorms. Standing amidst those buildings, the three-story school with its clock tower looked like it had slipped through time from the Middle Ages.

“Wow, it’s my first time up here!” Mayo exclaimed.

They entered the clock tower, which reached high into the sky. Climbing the maintenance stairs, they gazed out through a large round window. Spreading out before their eyes was a magnificent panorama of green. And the blue sparkling out past the mountains was probably the ocean. A flock of wild birds flew through the serene sky.

“Looking at it from here, it’s like we’re living in a little garden.”

“And everyone’s working, working.”

Looking down, they could see people carrying things like plywood and instrument cases out onto the yard.

“Maybe I should have joined some club too. With all those trees around, I bet I could gather a lot of nuts.”

“Nuts?”

“When I was little, I used to make accessories out of nuts and acorns and things. It’d be nice if there were a club like that.”

“Now that you mention it, you’re pretty good with your hands, aren’t you?”

“Ehehe, but I messed up sometimes too. I tried making a deer once to show everyone, but no one knew what it was.”

“But that’s because it was a boar.”

“Yeah, that’s what everyone kept saying.....eh? Shion-chan, how did you know that?”

Without answering, Shion kept looking outside. As the sun settled in the west, it cast subtle gradations of color through the window. It was almost twilight.

“Kuga-san is calling.”

“Eh?”

“Unlike last time, this is definitely her telling us to gather immediately.”



“So it’s the Suzaku people again?”

“That’s right. If we leave them alone, they might throw the clubs and the festival into chaos.”

“This is big! Let’s go, Shion-chan!”

White fingers ran softly through black hair.

“I’m so happy that you’re helping me out, Natsuki.”

“Hey, let go! Don’t play with people’s hair!”

Natsuki moved away from Shizuru’s hand a little forcefully. Her long hair flew about.

“I’m not here for you. I have unfinished business with her.”

Natsuki looked over at a corner of the room. It had been about three weeks ago, hadn’t it? Back then she’d strode into the Student Council room like she owned the place, but now Hinagiku Tomoe was a prisoner there. She was sitting in a chair with ropes tied around her entire body.

“I made a mistake. I should have shown you an illusion of the President instead,” Tomoe said, glaring at Natsuki and Shizuru hatefully.

“It’s really too bad,” said Shizuru. “You’re slow to figure it out, Hinagiku-san.”

“Don’t figure it out!” Natsuki yelled, conscious of the people watching. Not just Shizuru, but Haruka, Yukino, Chie, Aoi, and most of the other Student Council members were there as well. There had been much speculation about what had taken place between Shizuru and Natsuki two years before, and it seemed that rumors were still being spread around....

“A-anyway, we should be deciding what to do with her!”

“What to do? That should be obvious!”

Just as Natsuki tried to move the conversation along, Suzushiro Haruka strode to the front. In her right hand she held a thick oil-based felt-tip pen. The Secretary General was bursting with the desire for payback.

“Please wait a moment, Suzushiro-san. First there are some things I’d like to ask Hinagiku-san.”

Shizuru reined Haruka in, then directed her cool gaze towards Tomoe.

After she had received information on the Suzaku Association from Okuzaki Akira, Shizuru had moved rapidly. Gathering the Student Council members as well as volunteers from anti-Suzaku groups like Natsuki’s, she had counter-raided them on the day they had planned their uprising for. ‘Get them before they get you’.

The Suzaku Association’s specialty tactic was group psychokinesis, a technique by which they amplified their psychic power by working in unison. It was extremely powerful, but its effect was lessened in small numbers. By using various information sources to track their movements and attack them before they could gather, Shizuru had taken victory.

“However, there are still some things I don’t understand,” Shizuru said. “Suzaku’s real objective, and the person who planned it. I think I’ll have you tell me.”

“You think I’ll talk!?”

“No, I imagine not. But we have our own methods here. ....Kikukawa-san, if you please. In order to protect the Academy’s peace, I suppose it can’t be helped.”

“Understood, President.”

Closing the laptop she had been working on, Kikukawa Yukino moved to stand in front of Tomoe. She was the Student Council’s most powerful telepath. As though she had been expecting to be called up, her expression was composed. This had the opposite effect of making her seem imposing.

At this, Tomoe’s expression froze, but all she could do was rattle the chair.

“Stay away! I won’t have you inside my mind!”

“Sorry, Hinagiku-san. But it’s your fault.”

Yukino slipped past the walls of rejection inside Tomoe’s heart, and made her way in. Passing the flow of violent emotion, she accessed the layer where consciousness and memory overlapped.

Most telepaths could only read the outer layer of conscious thought. Entering a person’s innermost heart was difficult, and most who managed it would get lost in the labyrinth. Only first-rate telepaths like Yukino could retrieve specific information from within.

The keywords were Suzaku Association, Student Council, Culture Festival. Yukino increased her focus.

“.....why!?”

Tomoe was shouting. This was it. She was talking to another girl, who by contrast sounded calm.

“I’ll say it again. The plan must be moved up to the day before the culture festival.”

“It’s true that we can crush the festival a day early, but wouldn’t it be more effective to move the day of? The Student Council members will be spread thin with all the things they’ll be dealing with.”

“The target is no longer the Student Council.”

“Why? As long as the Fujino-led Council is in place, we won’t be able to seize power.”

“Even if we fight them, the best we can get is a draw. The Academy will just rebuild the Council, and revolution will be impossible in our generation. Calm down, Tomoe-san. I’ve thought of a better plan. If it goes well, we’ll be able to bypass the Council and attack the Academy directly.”

“You can’t be thinking of moving on the Principal or the Chairwoman!”

“Hehe, that would be a little too bold. We just need to find out Hoshinomiya’s weakness. We’ll expose whatever they’re planning. The new target is Kagura Mayo.”

“Kagura!? Why a girl like her?”



# 舞-HiME DESTINY

## 龍の巫女



Many things came falling from the sky, one of which struck Mayo in the head. It was a snack food bag. This also looked familiar.

“Kagura-san.”

Looking towards the voice, Mayo saw Higurashi Akane standing there.

“Akane-san, I’m so glad to see you! I thought I’d gone back in time or something!”

“That’s exactly what’s happened, Kagura-san.”

“Eh?”

“The sound just now was the car that brought you here exploding. I suppose it was to keep them quiet. Right about now, the Academy is in an uproar due to the yakuza attack. Everything was planned by the Academy – by Hoshinomiya. I wonder why they went to such lengths to create confusion on the day of your arrival.”

“.....I don’t know. I don’t know anything....”

Mayo shook her head weakly and tried to step back, but Akane cut in ruthlessly.

“At the very least, I just figured something out. There were two people in that car. You killed them.”

**To be continued...**

“There are too many unnatural circumstances surrounding her transfer. The handcuffs, the explosion, the yakuza, the unclear details of the relief statue incident. The Hoshinomiya organization is doing something behind the scenes, and we’re going to find out what it is. We can do it, don’t you think?”

“.....With your power, we can.”

“I’ve already figured out how to capture her. All you have to do is keep the Student Council busy.”

Tomoe had accepted reluctantly. It wasn’t that she had agreed, but that she had submitted to vastly superior power. It had looked like Hinagiku Tomoe was ruling the Suzaku Association like a queen, but in reality there had been a true queen.

And she wasn’t after the Student Council, but the transfer student Mayo.....



“Huh? Where’s Shion-chan?”

Tennouji Shion had been there just a moment ago, but now she was gone.

“She didn’t collapse from anemia again, did she?”

Worried, Mayo looked behind her, where she saw the arched school gate at the end of the road.

“Eh, why?”

Mayo and Shion had been headed for the Student Council room, but somehow Mayo was finding herself alone and outside of the school.

Was it an illusion? Remembering the fight with Tomoe, Mayo examined her surroundings cautiously.

There had been fog back then, out of which had emerged fantastic monsters.

There was no fog now, and the sunlight coming through the trees illuminated the road. It was a normal mountain scene, with no threat anywhere. Even so, Mayo felt a strong uneasiness in her heart.

“.....What is it? Did I do something here.....ah!”

She remembered. It felt the same as when she had first come to Fuuka Academy. She had been dazed, and when she had come to her hands had been bound – by handcuffs in the shape of dragons.

What had happened before that? She thought she had been in a moving car for a long time. She had been in a bad mood through the whole trip, and whoever had been with her had given her lots of snacks.

“Where did those people get me from?.....Eh!?”



# **Mai-HiME Destiny** **~The Dragon Priestess~**

## **Chapter 6:** **The Dragon Awakens**

**Author: Ibuki Hideaki**  
**Illustrated by: Meguro Sankichi**



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“Sorry I'm late!”

Tennouji Shion burst into the Student Council room, but she was already too late. The excitement was over.

On the floor lay Hinagiku Tomoe tied up with rope, and around the room stood the pale-faced student council members.

What had happened? Was the interrogation over? Had they found out who the Suzaku Association's leader was?

“Kuga-san?”

Like everyone else, Natsuki was standing with a shocked look on her face. Shion worriedly called out to her.

“What's wrong?”

“It looks like we were right about Hinagiku not being the head of the Suzaku association, but...”

“It's Akane. Higurashi Akane.”

“Eh!?”

Previously, the second-year student Hinagiku Tomoe had attacked Shion in the dawn mist.

Could it really be that Akane, who looked so innocent that one would think butter would not melt in her mouth, was behind it all? It's true that Shion didn't know Akane very well, but even Natsuki who knew her better was totally shocked!

“Even with the Academy's restriction on telepathy in place, a person can't reasonably expect to keep their true colors hidden forever. Sooner or later, someone with Class-A abilities would see through them. Kikukawa-san, were you able to learn anything else?”

“Yes, about Higurashi-san's ability. It seems that it goes beyond simple telepathy. She's able to literally enter the deep psyche of her victims without them realizing it. From there, she can cause psychological trauma (torauma). It's an extremely destructive ability.”

“Hm? A tiger(tora)-horse(uma)? What's so scary about an ability like that, Yukino?”

Yukino sighed.

“I'm saying she can enter your mind against your will without you even knowing about it, Haruka-chan.”

Normally, Yukino would have corrected Haruka's error more directly, but today she was so depressed you could hear it in her voice.

Could Hinagiku Tomoe's mind have been under Akane's control when she did everything? Yukino wasn't able to find out - simply learning what she did tired her out to the point that she could no longer use her powers.

“From now on, none of us can afford to be weak. We'll have to watch all of our weak points and make sure we're with someone else at all times. The Suzaku Association...who could have guessed they'd have such a terrible power...more importantly, does anyone know where Higurashi-san is right now?”

“Beats me. I'd like to know too.”

“I guess it isn't strange that she'd be able to slip away somewhere in all this confusion, but what are we going to do?”

“She's escaped, but if we go to the gymnasium two's equipment room, we should be able to capture another Suzaku Association member who might know something. Besides, we'll have to track them all down sooner or later.”

The student council had set up a network of allied students at various places throughout the academy, connected to each other through telepathy. Shizuru-san sent out instructions.

“Harada-san, Sennou-san”

“Roger! We'll capture them right away.”

Without even needing to hear Shizuru's words, Chie already knew what the orders would be. She headed towards the gymnasium.

The power of the Suzaku Association's members' abilities multiplies based on how many of them are together. Therefore, the student council had to capture them seperately and detain each member in a different part of the academy building upon capture. Of course, allowing them to escape was out of the question.

“Hah! Sending out your weak friends?”

Despite being tied up, Tomoe remained arrogant and fearless.

“Even if you turn the entire academy into a jail, you'll never be able to hold all of us!”

Ever since the incident on the terrace, Natsuki had been thinking. All across the academy's nondescript campus, students like Akane have been talking about a “revolution”.

“What about Mayo, shouldn't she be here as well?”

“Eh? Knowing her, she probably managed to get lost on the way, but she'll probably show up soon.”

Natsuki still hadn't spoken. Shion was beginning to think her bewildered look made her look a bit like a surprised fox.

“Putting aside Mayo for a moment, shouldn't we be worried about Kuga-san's lifelessness?”

“Sorry...”

Shion started to think. After the fight with Tomoe, the fog that was shrouding the academy had disappeared immediately...

Suddenly, Yukino let out a cry.

“Mayo-san!”

“What is it?”

“Just now, I was able to read from Tomoe-san's thoughts. Higurashi-san's target is Mayo. It's Kagura Mayo-san.”

“Huh!?”

“It doesn't matter. You're too late. By now, Akane-sama has probably already dealt with handcuff-chan, and then our great plan to take over this academy will begin!”

“So that was their plan all along!?”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

The entire room was staring at Tomoe with steely eyes, but it did nothing to wipe the confident look of victory from her face.

“She's in the backstage of the auditorium!”

“Suzushiro-san!”

“There's nothing you can do!”

Haruka ran for the auditorium at full speed.

The student council room broke into an uproar. The fight with the Suzaku association that had seemed like it was over wasn't. In fact, everyone now knew that it was only beginning.

“You thought you'd won, but we can't be put into checkmate as easily as you thought!”

Tomoe's triumphant voice echoed throughout the student council room.



“The two people in the car, you killed them...”

“Wha...what!? I didn't do anything like that!”

In front of Akane, a nervous Mayo stood shaking her head. However, in front of them lay the burning wreckage of a car, the black smoke rising from it was making Mayo nauseous.

“Then what caused this car to explode? From what I heard, this event caused a big falling out among the Hoshinomiya administrators”

“The administrators of Hoshinomiya?”

“I don't know what it's called, but there's an organization that's in charge of Fuuka Academy. They send scouts out all across Japan to look for children with telekinetic abilities. Then when they find you, they kidnap you and take you here.”

Akane's ability allowed her to read even those memories that Mayo couldn't recall. Before being taken by car to the Academy, she had been brought to Hokkaido by a chartered plane. Before that, she had been a student at a high school in Kanagawa Prefecture.

“I'd hate to think what would happen to you if they found out this was your fault...”

“It's not my fault! I'm not lying!”

Mayo had a vision of the day she arrived at the academy and was saved by Shizuru. An explosion. Like the sound of a car bursting into flames. The screams of the academy's students.

“Lately, it hasn't been unusual to have gangs drive up here and try to kidnap students.”

It hadn't started to get dark yet, but school was just ending. Mayo was leaving with some girls from her class when a young man in a sportscar drove up and forced her to get in and take some kind of drug. Somewhere around a railway crossing, the car's alarm went off and everyone shopping on the crowded street ran wildly away.

Mayo was demonstrating her telekinetic abilities. She forced the car to head directly towards a mother pushing a stroller. Just before collision, the earth's gravity seemed to lose its effect on the sportscar, and it floated into the air. It continued to float up several metres, until it started to fall, landing in the sports ground of a public park and bursting into flames. Close to the burning car was a man and several of Mayo's classmates, who the car had missed by only a hair's breadth.

At first, Mayo wasn't sure what had happened. She felt like she had been in some kind of trance. As her senses returned, she saw a man and several of her classmates. A girl with pigtails was coldly staring at Mayo, like the victim of a crime looking at the perpetrator. The eyes of the other girls were full of fear, as though they had just had an encounter with a monster. Their stares pierced Mayo's heart like spears.

However, they weren't the only ones watching her. Disguised as an ambulance, a car from Hoshinomiya took advantage of the situation to anaesthetize and kidnap Mayo. The last thing she remembered was having the handcuffs put on her before she blacked out.

“Being able to create such a disturbance...clearly your powers go well beyond simple spoon-bending. It's no surprise that you were marked by Hoshinomiya. I wonder how long they followed you...”

Akane, too, had seen all of the memories Mayo just recalled.

All throughout her elementary and junior high school years, Mayo had had to repeatedly change schools in S city because she kept unintentionally revealing her psychic powers.

Of course, at an early age Mayo learned that it was important to not stand out if she wanted her life to be normal. However, her quietness made her a target of bullying for the other children, and she would fight back by making them float in the air...

“Children can be so cruel... That reminds me, a year ago when you fought back after getting bullied for having an anime pencilcase, some guys tried to put you on a TV show, right?”

Just looking or speaking a little bit differently than others could make one a target for bullying, so it goes without saying that having psychic powers would make things even worse.

“Everyone else who has psychic abilities had to go through pretty much the same things. Eventually, we cross the line and end up creating some kind of public disturbance with our powers. In fact, that's how Hoshinomiya finds most of us. However, their purpose isn't just to teach people with psychic powers how to live normal lives in society. It's also to conduct research on us. In my opinion, there's nothing wrong with that, but it isn't the whole story. Now, Kagura-san, let me tell you the reason they've had their eye on you...”



The word “psychometry” means “to know what was there after it is gone.”

Ever since she was young, Tennouji Shion has possessed the ability to see an object's past simply by touching it. However, it took time for her to be able to obtain a true understanding of what those pasts meant.

By the time she became a high school first year, she was able to see most things clearly. And then, a mysterious transfer student wearing handcuffs appeared. Shion had never quite been able to get a good read on her, but she could tell, without doubt, that she was trouble.

The first time she touched Kagura Mayo's handcuffs by accident, it was when they were going to their fight with Hinagiku Tomoe through the deep fog.

So that they wouldn't get separated from one another in the fog, Mayo and Shion were holding hands. As they ran through the white mist, their warm bodies became wet from condensation.

At that time, Shion's hand came into contact with the handcuffs, and Mayo's “unconscious past” began to flow into Shion.

It took time for Shion to understand the past that she saw, and even when she understood it, she didn't want to believe it. The strain of trying to deny it was so great that Shion lost consciousness.

Even now, a week later, she still had nightmares about it and didn't want to accept it. Suddenly, the “lifeless” Kuga Natsuki spoke.

“Oi!”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

It seemed Natsuki's senses had returned.

The number of people in the student council room had decreased substantially. The Suzaku Association member they had tried to capture had escaped and gone to get reinforcements. Even President Fujino had left.

Nobody knew all the details, but there had been a call from the student council's Director-General Kanzaki Reito.

With the room almost empty, Shion noticed that there were two staff members she didn't know the name of standing in the room.

“Hey, Shion...”

“Kuga-san? What is it?”

“Bring that to me quickly.”

Natsuki seemed to be pointing to the chair Hinagiku Tomoe was tied to.

“What?”

“Even though we put a sleeping pill in her drink, with so few people here and so much confusion, you would think Hinagiku's companions would try to come and rescue her.”

Shion thought about it. If Hinagiku Tomoe could create illusions, then she could make it seem like she drank the sleeping pill without actually having done so. In fact, maybe it could even explain why the fog disappeared so quickly...

“Eh!? Then we...”

Shion had now become the one who was speechless. Everything had been an illusion created by Hinagiku Tomoe!

“Really, you're so easy to trick. Thanks for your help.”

Tomoe, who had managed to wriggle her way out of the rope without anyone being able to see it, laughed scornfully at Shion.

Not only that, but she had more illusions up her sleeve. By taking advantage of her ability to hide what is there as well as show what is not there, she had an “invisible whip” that she used as a weapon. However, rather than fight, the Suzaku Association “leader” simply disappeared, leaving the student council room feeling duped and deceived.

“I guess we lost, wouldn't you say, Kuga-san?”

When engaging in self-criticism, Shion's voice was surprisingly depressing.

Shion took off her glasses and looked up at the ceiling. Tears began to run down her face. She started to think about what she missed during the time she was asleep.

She took a deep breath and put her glasses back on (she looked better while wearing them).

Her voice became stronger.

“It's not over yet, but we have to get the fog that's been in our hearts for the past week out!”

Shion had a plan. She knew that they were trying to awaken the “Dragon Priestess”.

“Yes!”

Her MiKO power told her that the one they needed to find was close by.

“Well, let's go.”

Shion had never been both this frightened and this excited at the same time. The student council room was almost silent with anticipation.

She didn't look at the others in the room who were shaking or too afraid to move. The relentless flow of time had now led to the opening of the door of their fates!

“...I'm not shaking or too afraid to move...”



Kawada's escape from the pool's changing room had been a success.

He went past the large boulder near the bicycle rack. The student council had put out a request for reinforcements.

Under the direction of Higurashi Akane, the Suzaku Association's members had escaped the grasp of the student council and were gathering together. The more of them that were gathered together, the stronger their telepathy became, so it was no surprise that they would want to all gather in one place together.

“It looks like there's going to be a war, but a war and a revolution aren't too different from each other.”

In any case, Akane cared little about the word used to describe it. What she *did* care about was having to make a pushy subordinate the Suzako Association's “fake leader”, but since she wanted out of this jail of an Academy, she didn't have a choice.

“According to the head office, Hinagiku Tomoe-sama's escape was a success.”

“No surprise there. Tomoe-san is still the same show-off she's always been.”

“So you would have chosen *not* to escape?”

“If it were me, I wouldn't have let them know I'd escaped so that I'd be able to move about secretly.”

Keeping their plans a secret from Hoshinomiya and the Academy Chief Kanzaki Rei was something the Suzaku Association took seriously, but it appeared it was too late for that now.

And then there was Kagura Mayo.

Akane had manipulated Mayo into sleepwalking. She had her go up a staircase, and then followed her with some other members.

Even though all the students of Fuuka Academy had psychic powers, Hoshinomiya had secretly especially singled out Mayo. She was part of a special group of MiKOs, amounting to around ten percent of the student population, that the academy went out of their way to keep extensive secret files on.

How were they secret? The government mandated that the Fuuka Academy staff keep basic files on all the MiKO, but the government didn't know about the special secret files. They were for Hoshinomiya's use only.



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

If this fact were to be revealed to the government, the academy's administration would get into huge trouble. They might even lose their jobs. With this in mind, Higurashi Akane had been working behind the scenes, using the fight with the student council as a diversion to hide her true goal.

Following Mayo up the stairs, they eventually reached the academy building's rooftop. A week earlier, she had been there with Shion. It was so dark that the clock tower could not be read, appearing only as a black silhouette. In the distance, a “gorogoro” sound could be heard.

“Thunder? I wonder if the weather will be okay for the cultural festival tomorrow.”

Akane realized the irony of what she had said and let out a cynical laugh.

“Nonetheless, why is it that she came here?”

“Maybe she's going to commit suicide by jumping to her death.”

Akane's subordinates started giggling, trying to muffle themselves causing them to make sounds like gulps and snorts. The thought of being punished by their leader's power scared them so much they started to shake.

“But it will be bad if Kagura-san jumps before we get to talk to her.”

Akane ran up to Mayo but decided not to do anything.

Still, she knew that people with psychic powers often had tragic pasts, and that the academy's administration had been extra-secretive about Mayo...

“Hey, let us see it. What's her MiKO power? Call out what Kanzaki calls ‘The Dragon Priestess’.”

“The Dragon...Priestess?”

“Yeah, the Dragon Priestess.”

“The...Dragon...”

“Huh? What are you saying it again for?”

At that moment, Akane entered Mayo's mind. She went deep into the darkness of Mayo's sealed subconscious. With a thunderous roar, images flowed into her mind. Mud. A ringing in her ears. Dizziness. Her arms and legs became heavy. A flowing stream. Some pebbles. Countless screams. Deep black clouds. Walking up and down a shoreline. Water flowing into her shoes. A pot. A dishpan. A broken plastic umbrella. A nameplate and fresh chicken. A car. Another thunderous roar. She couldn't tell what was what anymore.

The thunderous rumbling in her ear began to overwhelm her. Her breathing became heavier and heavier, but finally Akane was able to regain control of the thoughts flowing into her mind. She heard people's names being called out. Arms flailing frantically as they sank into a muddy pond. Her body became unable to move as it bobbed above and below the water. The current caused something to hit the back of her shoulder. Cold water flowed into her nose and throat as she tried to let out a scream. She became unable to raise her head above the water anymore.

Akane calmed down. She remembered that this was nothing more than the past of Kagura Mayo. She struggled and escaped from the water. At last she was able to see what was going on in Mayo's mind.

There was a flood. A river had flooded. No, not a river. Just a stream that had swollen due to a rainstorm. Miniature cars and houses were swept away while people and animals were tossed about helplessly.

“Uwaaaaaaaaahh!!”

She heard a child's cry. It was close by. Where? A startled Akane started looking around. Wearing a one-piece dress covered in mud, a gloomy-looking five or six year old girl was floating in the air and crying.

“This girl, she has psychic powers? Kagura-san? No way...”

Akane shook her head. Was this flood from Kagura Mayo's childhood? Is it what caused her to have such great power?

Akane couldn't believe her eyes. Suddenly, something long and narrow began appearing and disappearing in the dark clouds.

A tornado...no, it was something alive. A serpent? No, it was too big and serpents don't fly in the air.

“That's...”

Akane didn't want to believe it. She thought it was just a nickname, but Hoshinomiya wasn't joking. She really IS “The Dragon Priestess”.

However, this isn't reality, it's just Kagura Mayo's memories.

“Am I really supposed to believe this happened? I'm not stupid.”

Regardless of how much Akane denied its existence, it was still before her. A body several metres long and covered in scales, with glowing eyes and sharp teeth. No different than what appeared in ancient Chinese and Japanese legends.

It not only flew through the air the ridiculous way you'd expect a dragon to fly, there were two more of them! Each had different colored scales. On was red, one was blue, and one was black.

The red, blue and black dragons, and everything else around the young, crying, Mayo began spinning around and around. The spinning became more and more violent. Akane could no longer tell the sky from the ground. She opened her mouth and water flowed in.



Pale blue lightning shot from the clouds. Thunder roared and large raindrops began striking the windowpane. Inside the chairwoman's office, a person was pacing back and forth.

“How about using the shoeboxes by the main entrance instead of going in and out this way all the time?”

“There's more bicycle racks over here! I'm extremely short of hands right now, so I came to see if you could lend me some people.”

The academy's multiple telephones had all been ringing off the hook. The academy's premises had become a battleground for the students. The psychic-power-battles were getting to be much larger than they had been in the past.

The administration attempted to find out about the battles before they take put the security staff on alert, but it was a tough job.

“This is why I said before this all started that we should have increased our monitoring capacity...”

Holding the telephone in one hand and eating sushi with the other, Sakomizu Kaiji glanced at the principal.



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

As usual, Kanazaki Rei was expressionless. This was a major crisis, but he was just tapping his fingers on his desk. The clever principal kept what was going on in his mind completely hidden. With all the uproar, tomorrow's cultural festival was in danger.

However, Kanzaki could guess that with the way things were, Sakomizu probably wasn't even thinking about the cultural festival.

“Don't tell the students about this. It would only serve to make the confusion worse. Instead, ask them to report the whereabouts of Kagura Mayo and Tennouji Shion to the security room if they see them.”

“Okay, but...”

“Sakomizu-sensei, the students all have special powers. This will require expert help.”

“Yes...”

“Geeze...” Sakomizu thought as he arranged things with the staff in the security room. The principal whispered something in someone's ear. Probably some kind of order.

“The academy's security is full of holes. Even before this, those Yakuza were able to get in, so obviously evading security is a simple task.”

“Really, that *is* true...eh?”

Sakomizu pushed his glasses up. Somehow, it seemed a female student had gotten in and was standing next to him. She had an odd hairstyle, with her green hair being longer on her right-hand side. She looked familiar. Sakomizu was sure she was one of the students on the list of those to be watched closely.

“You...you're Hinagiku Tomoe!”

“Sakomizu-sensei, I see you're still eating octopus.”

“Octopus!?”

The food Sakomizu was eating had a shiny, smooth texture. As he held the telephone receiver in his other hand, he realized that it had transformed into an octopus leg! The shock almost made him jump out of his seat. He looked at the sushi he was eating and saw that it had been replaced with a live octopus waving around its suction-cup laden tentacles. Looking around, the entire room was full of dark red octopuses!

“Eh!?”

Sakomizu looked around. The principal didn't even seem to notice. The voices of the other staff sounded strange, but other than that they were fine. Sakomizu rolled along the floor and escaped outside.

“Wha!? There are still more octopuses!”

The bald-headed Kanzaki saw Tomoe's sneering face.

“Using your illusions as always? The other teachers told me your fearless attitude had gotten you caught and detained by the student council, Tomoe-chan.”

Homura Nagi had come one step ahead of Tomoe. Sakomizu had always paid close attention to that fox-like boy.

“Your information is old, Nagi, I'm free now. Have you decided you're going to side with the academy?”

“I told you before, I'm on the side of whoever wins. But then, has the winning side not already been decided? Shion is the only one searching for Mayo, but a clumsy glasses-girl like her won't be able to find the dragon, who is the only important unknown factor.”

“Tell me more.”

At this point, Kanazaki Rei began paying attention to the conversation.

“In short, Higurashi Akane is going to force Mayo to fully release her power. If that happens, everything will be over.”

## “And I'm missing it!?”

Tomoe's face turned red with anger.

“Hey, I hope you aren't thinking of doing something crazy. Your face is looking weird and making a ‘pika pika’ sound. I guess it happens to everyone once in a while, but try to calm down...”

“I know. Want to know a secret about Hoshinomiya? Originally, they started out with benevolent aims, but unfortunately...”

“Shut up!”

An LCD monitor sitting on a desk made a cracking sound and began oozing liquid. Then it flew into the wall.

“I don't need to listen to your nonsense!”

“Hey hey, Tomoe-chan, don't forget there are people here.”

“Nagi! You've been spying this whole time!”

Tomoe's voice roared through the air. She revealed her whip and began attacking Nagi, who ducked just in time. A fire appeared to block any escape route for Nagi. Admiring Tomoe, he jumped into the air and teleported away.

“You're working with Shion, aren't you!?”

“Geeze, I had to be rescued...eh? Shion?”

Nagi gulped in astonishment, and even Kanazaki Rei was surprised. In front of them was Tennouji Shion. Earlier, a group of Suzaku Association members had attacked Kagura Mayo, but Kuga Natsuki's small group should have caught up with them by now. How well would they do?

As for Hinagiku Tomoe, she looked at Shion with wide eyes and a sneer on her face.

“My my, I guess someone isn't as clumsy as I thought. Are you really here to save him?”

“Hinagiku-san, I'll leave it up to you. Please take care of things here.”

“...What?”

“Otherwise, your ability will...”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“You're not making any sense!”

Tomoe let out a high-pitched shriek and whipped Shion in the face, snapping her glasses in two.

“There's no way I'll let you escape...or is that not your plan?”

Tomoe noticed a glitter in Shion's eyes. Tears began to role down her face.

“Hah! Are you really that scared?”

“If these tears were my own, they would run out fast enough. But these aren't my tears. They are her tears...her sorrow.”

“You haven't said a single thing that makes sense since showing up.”

Shion bent her knee and lunged at Tomoe. Tomoe's field of vision suddenly became blurry, terrorizing her. She too started to cry. She tried to wipe the tears away with her hands, but they wouldn't stop flowing out.

“Wh...what kind of ability is this?”

“This isn't an illusion. These tears...these tears are the truth! Although I guess you wouldn't be able to understand that...”

“Tch!”

Tomoe swung her whip, but Shion dodged it. The attack instead hit a painting that was hanging on the wall, knocking it to the ground and causing the glass to loudly break and cover the floor. The tears continued to flow, making it difficult for her to see.

The sweat on Tomoe's back was starting to make her cold. As demonstrated during the fight in the morning fog, this first year could easily create illusions to trap others. Even Kagura Mayo, with all her power, was susceptible to them.

Was Shion afraid? No! That would be stupid!

The battle went on, with only a paper-thin difference separating the two. Suddenly, a glimmer appeared in Shion's right hand, as she revealed a dagger! Tomoe threw up a shield made of pure psychokinetic energy, but Shion's knife cut through it easily.

“You're...”

Tomoe's entire body pulsed with fear.



“I'll show you the strength of Suzushiro!”

A bunch of bicycles had been piled into a bicycle mountain. Natsuki was shouting insults at the Suzaku Association members.

The bicycle rack near the auditorium was the site of a great battle. A group of Suzaku Association members had successfully gathered together, boosting the power of their psychokinesis. Suzushiro Haruka fought back by tossing whatever she could get her hands on at them. Since they were at a bicycle rack, this tended to be bicycles. Whether she liked it or not, Kuga Natsuki had been forced to come to Haruka's aid.

“Damn! At this rate we're going to lose! Hey, Give me your motorcycle suit!”

The hem of Natsuki's skirt had several oil and blood stains on it, which she kept hidden during uniform checks.

“Because of me...everyone...it's all my fault.”

“Huh?”

They heard the voice of someone sobbing and looked in its direction. Behind the mountain of bicycles, a female student was curled up and crying. Natsuki looked over at Secretary General Suzushiro Haruka and was shocked!

The hot-blooded, proud and reckless pursuer of justice Suzushiro had started to cry! It was almost impossible to believe it, but she was crying in public!

“Hey, there's nothing to cry about!”

Suddenly, a wave of sadness overcame Natsuki.

All around them, the cries of the Suzaku Association members who had been pinned under bicycles could be heard, even though they didn't seem to have any painful injuries.

“This doesn't make any sense!”

Suddenly, there was a loud noise behind them. Bicycles began flying away from the bicycle rack and landing on top of the roof, where the figures of some people could be seen. Natsuki and Haruka raised their guard.

“Are they your friends?”

“Are you joking? Whoever they are, they're just causing trouble.”

Natsuki pointed her gun at a pouting Yuuki Nao. Usually, she'd yell three or four insults, but this time all she did was cry.

“Huh? What are you so sad about?”





# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

“I'm not crying! It's just that it's raining! You're the one who's crying!”

“Sh...shut up! It's the rain! The rain!”

They continued to insist to each other that what was falling down their cheeks were raindrops, even though both of them realized that wasn't true.

“Geez! It's been raining so much lately! I hate the rain!”

Natsuki looked up at the rooftop and saw that people had been gathering there. A flash of lightning illuminated the area and she saw that a girl with twintail hair was floating in the air above them. It didn't look like a safe place to be.

“Mayo!?”

The goal of the Suzaku Association that Hinagiku was talking about...how did it involve Kagura Mayo? What did Higurashi do to her? Natsuki had to go and find out.

“Are you going to come too?”



How much time had passed since the flood? As the twin rotors came into view it became clear that the helicopter didn't belong to the police or the media. There was no writing on it to suggest who it belonged to. Perhaps it belonged to the military.

The helicopter flew over to a cliff and saw Mayo was lying on top. It landed at the nearest flat area and people began to get out. Akane recognized some of their faces. One was bald and was, without doubt, Kanazaki Rei, and wearing a Fuuka Academy uniform was a ten-years-younger Chairwoman Fumi Himeno!

Next to Fumi was an elementary-school student with long hair. Who was she? From her body language, it looked like she was ordering around the others.

Under her direction, they loaded Mayo onto a stretcher and inserted an intravenous drip to her arm. She shut her eyes tight and let out a tormented groan.

“They're all gone...Everybody is gone...”

Mayo was moved into the helicopter. She held out her small mud-covered hand. In it was some sort of accessory made out of nuts. No one took it.



“I've won! *Exactly as planned.*”

Akane had left the past of Mayo's subconscious and returned to the present.

Ten years ago, a flood wiped out Kagura Mayo's village. Without doubt, the event was covered up by Hoshinomiya. If this fact were to become public, they'd be finished.

“Everyone...they're all gone...why...why am I like this?”

Mayo kept saying the same thing over and over. She got up and sluggishly started walking. She walked over to the wire fence surrounding the edge of the rooftop. The clock tower hands shifted lower. She turned towards it.

Who would have expected she would have had such a past. The trauma she suffered was far greater than that of the others. It was probably for her own well-being that she sealed it out of her conscious memory.

Everyone on the rooftop was crying. Every member of the Suzaku Association except for one was there.

Mayo released a deep cry of despair through telepathy that resonated among all the students. It was a demonstration of how great Kagura Mayo's power was. But that was all it was.

“Mayo-chan!”

“Kagura-san!”

She heard the voices and saw the faces of her friends.

Sugiura Midori was standing dumbfounded. She had been amused by the one-sided battle, but she didn't anticipate this outcome at all.

The beautiful Student Council President Fujino Shizuru was looking into her face for the first time.

“Mayo!”

“What are you doing, you transfer student!”

Kuga Natsuki was there. Mayo was surprised to see the first year Yuuki Nao who was always skipping classes there too.

Her long hair blowing in the wind, Natsuki ran towards Mayo with an eager look on her face. However, a sudden bolt of lightning interrupted their reunion. There was the roar of thunder as the lightning struck the roof's metal fence, and Mayo's figure disappeared.



She had been too late. Natsuki could do nothing but cry out and fall to her knees.

“Natsuki...”

“Please...get up...”

As Shizuru approached, Natsuki got up but did not look at her. What had happened to Mayo? She had to find some way to find out.

It was over. Not just for the student council, but for all of Fuuka Academy. The cage they had been confined in would be thrown open. All their plans were ruined.

“Higurashi, you...”

When the angry Natsuki turned around, she saw a situation she could only describe as bizarre. The triumphant Akane was staring upwards with her mouth agape in shock. Shizuru, Nao, Midori, and everyone else were also all looking towards the sky. What were they looking at?

Natsuki looked at all of them again, then she looked up to see what they were looking at. What she saw sent shivers through her body.

A bright red glow, as though a volcano was erupting and spraying lava in the distance. However, this glow took on a cylindrical shape and was flying through the air in a wriggling pattern. As it flew closer, it became clear that it had a scale-covered body and two beards attached to its face. It wasn't a glowing light, but a huge beast!

“A...a dragon!? Do you think I'm stupid!?”



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY〜龍の巫女〜

Suddenly, the band of light vanished. As she thought, it had just been a hallucination. She looked over to the roof's fence and saw a girl standing there.

“...Mayo?”

Natsuki called out to her, but Mayo didn't move.

“Well, this is unusual...” Nao murmured from within the crowd.

They started to move towards her.

Her hair that was normally tied in twintails was instead untied and came down to her waist. Not only that, but there was an uncomfortable feeling in the air...

“Ah!” Natsuki suddenly blurted out.

There was something on the back of Mayo's neck. It looked like something crawling from her neck up to her face. It consisted of three lines. One line was red, and when it reached the top of Mayo's head it vanished. It was reminiscent of the time Shion thought she saw the design on Mayo move while she was changing clothes.

“The seal...it's been broken...”

Higurashi Akane was shivering in fear. The sound of her teeth chattering could be clearly heard. Mayo had destroyed her feeling of certain victory.

It was impossible for anyone else to tell, but Akane, who had been inside Mayo's mind, realized that what they were seeing was the release of Mayo's true self.

“What are you doing!? Let's get her!”

The terror felt by Akane was felt by her followers as well. Even under normal circumstances, it would take the psychokinesis of 10 people to put up a fight, but now they had no chance.

The roof of the academy began shaking. The bricks and mortar holding it up were shifting. The concrete began to crack. Gears and shafts were slipping out of place. The building kept shaking until finally the clock tower Mayo was standing under started to collapse.

“The clock tower!”

“Mayo, run away!”

However, Mayo simply continued standing where she was, as the dust of the collapsing tower rose. Natsuki and the others could only stare in disbelief as the tragedy unfolded and Mayo was crushed.

Surely, the overwhelming mass of the clock tower would have crushed Mayo to death instantly, unless she somehow had a way to avoid the collapse.

And avoid it she did! Somehow, with her almost god-like level of power, she did what no other person with telekinesis would even think of attempting!

“The handcuffs!”

“When did they...”

Shizuru and Natsuki both spoke at exactly the same time. The handcuffs that had limited Mayo's freedom to move ever since she had arrived at the academy, the handcuffs that nobody had been able to cut, were gone.

But that wasn't all. The dragon bracelets remained, and were glowing bright red, as though they were brimming with energy waiting to be released.

“Let's go!”

There were screams as Mayo effortlessly tossed the clock tower, causing a small earthquake. The students shrieked as dust enveloped the rooftop, turning it into a hell of agonizing cries.

“What a nice sound. I, Fu Hao, am finally back in control of this body. As expected, it works as well as always.”

Mayo looked at the palms of both her hands and started laughing.

“Now, what should I do first...”

Mayo casually picked up a large piece of concrete and turned towards the group of students.

“I guess I should do some tidying up.”

Her playful tone was completely out of sync with the environment. It was the kind of sarcastic tone a girl might take on while bullying someone.

Mayo let the concrete chunk fall to the ground. Instead, she brought the palm of her hand to her mouth and blew a puff of air. It was only a tiny puff, but it had more force than an explosion. It caused a bright red tornado to sweep over the rooftop.



# 舞-HiME★DESTINY～龍の巫女～

Not caring about what others would think of them, the Suzaku Association members started screaming even louder. Their difference in power was clear. Not long ago, they thought they were the strongest, but now they just felt like losers. Everybody ran frantically to avoid the tornado of fire. One person's uniform caught on fire, but they teleported into a water fountain just in time. Suddenly a telekinetic force flung them into an Ezo spruce tree, where they were left dangling on a branch.

As if her feet were frozen solid, Higurashi Akane didn't move. No one came to her aid or tried to rescue her. The supposed strongest group in the academy, the Suzaku Association, were nowhere to be seen.

As the tornado of fire drew closer, everyone was running frantically. Suddenly, someone tripped on a piece of concrete.

However, the tornado stopped in front of Akane. Within the whirlwind, a flash of hair could be seen. Mayo became visible. The heat of the tornado on Akane's face was strong enough to be painful.

“Hah! You're just a mere human.”

“Ahhh...aaahhhh...”

“I see...you wanted to start a revolution so you'd be able to get out of this academy and see...Kazu-kun, is it?”

“Eh?”

“Your old boyfriend, huh...”

“Stop! Don't read it!”

“Hm? What a convenient thing to say when you've been rummaging through other people's minds and stirring up trouble. Let's see... Kazu-kun...looks like he's just an ordinary human. You hid your power from him while you were together, but eventually he found out...no, that's not it...your youthful love allowed you to see into the depths of his heart unobstructed.

“Hey!”

Without thinking, Natsuki cut into their conversation.

It was indeed without thinking, because she normally would have rather let the crying Akane get what she deserved.

Previously, Natsuki had been patient with the transformed Mayo, because in the past she had always changed back after a while. This time, however, it was clear that something was different.

“Kagura Mayo...no. Fake Mayo...who are you?”

★

Hinagiku Tomoe was being carried out on a stretcher.

The defeated Tomoe had seen the entire spectacle on the rooftop through a computer monitor. The destruction of the clocktower. The tornado of fire. The students running away, and a faint light that was surely Kagura Mayo with her handcuffs released.

“Finally...Finally the seal is released.”

Kanzaki Rei's voice was hushed but excited.

“She...Fu Hao...The Dragon Priestess...can you hear her voice, Shion? Do you understand the significance of this? Fu Hao, of the ancient Chinese...”

“Shang Dynasty, a prosperous kingdom based around the Yellow River. Fu Hao was a first-rate female general whose intelligence and courage led her and the forces she commanded to victory over several foreign enemies.”

“That's what people say, but she was also a woman who loved dragons more than anything else. In fact, she was obsessed with them. She was also a priestess.”

“But I thought she died 3000 years ago?”

“So it is said. But Shion, you saw all of it. The breaking of the seal. The dragon's release. The figure of a dragon that everyone saw.”

“...Mayo...”

“You still want to call her that?”

Shion opened the file. Fire reflected off the lenses of the backup glasses she was wearing, causing them to glow bright red.

“It says her name is Fu Hao.”

“But that doesn't mean anything to me. She's my childhood friend. A friend from my village. My only family...no matter what, that's who she is!”



**To be continued...**